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## KING HENRY IV





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BY

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'HENRY V' 'OWEN GLYN DŴR' 'A NEW HISTORY OF ENGLAND'  
ENGLAND IN THE MIDDLE AGES' 'THE NATION AT WORK'  
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# DEDICATION

FOR

DAVID T. I. GRIFFITH DAVIES

AND

M. OLWEN M. GRIFFITH DAVIES

MY DEAR DAVID AND OLWEN :

One of the critics of my *life* of Henry V. was a little put out because he detected in my work a sneaking regard for my hero's father, Henry IV., whom he described as an 'unattractive monarch.' Now I must confess that I find much to admire in the life and work of Henry IV. : much more, in fact, than I anticipated when my friend and publisher, Mr Arthur Barker, suggested that Henry was a fitting subject for biographical study ; and my one fear is that I may not have done this king the justice which is his due.

I confess to a peculiar infatuation by the very ordinary qualities of Henry's character : they seem to me to make his achievements so much the more noteworthy. His courage was not the sort which wins decorations for valour on a field of battle ; but it was akin to that which to-day enables thousands of our fellow-countrymen to face the hopelessness of unemployment with stiff upper lips. A 'go-getting' business manager, trained perhaps in one of those wonderful business colleges which they have in America, would probably have exploited qualities which strike the ordinary man as inherently rooted in a *decent* conception of doing one's duty ; and the result might have been that posterity would have come to regard Henry IV. as either an unmitigated bounder or a very staunch fellow, the final decision depending entirely upon the quality and quantity of the publicity campaign.

I recognise that once again I have laid myself open to the accusation of blind hero-worship. But while I do not very much mind facing an indictment on that count, I would in

defence like to stress that there is a subtle difference between hero-worship and justifiable appreciation. Henry IV. has never been, and never will be, one of my heroes ; but I very definitely appreciate his work, the more so because it represents the solid achievement of a man faced with terrible and terrifying difficulties. The Wheel of Fortune invariably spun awkwardly for him ; and the Fates delighted in playing him impish tricks. But Henry grimly went on, hiding disappointments within the sanctuary of his heart and believing that in the end steadfastness would triumph. His reward, as I see it, is the recognition by students of history that he did his duty as a king and a citizen.

It is pertinent to ask : What is biography ? In his review of *Henry V.* Mr Richard Strachey deplored that I had been 'lamentably starved of any material that can be called even remotely personal in' Henry's life, and then went on to state that 'in a phrase, the intimate aspects of his subject's *private* life are of infinitely more value to the biographer than the best documented records of the political and historical period in which he lived, however important the public rôle he played in his time.'

Perhaps there is something to be said for this point of view, even though personally I refuse to accept it as an accurate definition of biography. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines biography as 'the history of the lives of individual men, as a branch of literature.' Are not a man's deeds as important as his thoughts, his achievements as his aspirations ? A pornographer might desire to reveal to posterity all the intimate details of private life ; but the wise man throws a thick veil across them, and sees to it that posterity should remain ignorant of his guilty secrets. The observations of contemporaries, too, must be carefully handled, because evil-disposed persons [and the world abounds in this breed] never scruple about placing the worst possible interpretations upon human behaviour, revealing in their innuendoes the ugly filthiness of their own minds.

Modern psychology—that *Open Sesame* of much modern biographical writing—claims that it is able to read between the lines of journals and diaries, letters and chronicles ; but the world has yet to be persuaded that these psychological 'revela-

tions' of men's and women's private lives are strictly true. The psychologist derives his knowledge from the study of the human mind; but since the mind is such a complicated and contradictory piece of mechanism, it is difficult for psychologists to crystallise their observations and analyses into scientific laws. And there are very definite limitations to their excursions into the past. They cannot submit to scientific examination the minds of people dead centuries ago, unless by some magical means they can transport themselves into the age in which their subjects lived. To subject Henry IV. to a process of psycho-analysis is a sheer waste of time—and almost certain to be unfair to Henry.

This touches upon one of the main defects of much modern historical writing: people blandly attempt to judge a bygone age by the standards of their own times, and as a result leave on the minds of their readers hopelessly wrong impressions. In this book I have attempted, at one point, to draw attention to this in a concrete example. Generations of Protestant writers have asserted that Henry IV. was responsible for 'the burning death.' That is not true: the penalty of burning for heresy was endorsed by his parliament-men—honest-to-goodness Englishmen. Admittedly it was a punishment disliked by many Englishmen in that age; but I venture to suggest that they detested it chiefly because it was intimately connected with a foreign Power, the Papacy, and not because it was brutal and inhuman. The process of disembowelling a victim before hanging [the thoroughly English way of punishing a Papist in the days of the Counter-Reformation or a thief in the eighteenth century] was probably far more brutal and inhuman: the records prove that the victim often remained conscious while the operation of disembowelling was performed, and sometimes the oblivion of death had not come when the quartering, subsequent to the hanging, took place.

Let us, therefore, judge Henry IV. by the standards of his own age; and with this object in view I have tried to set out the chief events in his career and to indicate something of the greatness of his work for his people.

I offer grateful thanks to Dr R. A. Veale for valuable help in the 'diagnosis' of Henry's illness; to my father, the Reverend Thomas Davies, and to my friend, Mr F. R. Worts, for reading



my manuscript ; to Miss Cecile M. Driffield for designing an attractive jacket, an unusual genealogical table and pictorial map ; to Mr R. J. Gordon and the Staff of the Leeds Reference Library for many kindnesses ; and to Mr Arthur Barker for the interest which he always displays in the making of a book. My indebtedness to those scholars who have made the period of Henry's reign a subject of special study can never be adequately expressed : at the end of the book I have included some bibliographical notes indicating from where I have derived my material and inspiration.

To conclude on a personal note. I have written this book for you at a time when your interests were far removed from history, and were concentrated chiefly on engines and fluffy animal toys ; but perhaps the day will come when both of you will learn to love the fascinating records of bygone days. Only the other day I met an old friend of mine, a professor of history in a provincial university, and he confessed that he never read a novel because he found so much in history to entertain him. He is a very wise man.

J. D. GRIFFITH DAVIES.

LEEDS, *Easter*, 1935.

*Postscript.*—Since completing this book I have had an opportunity of discussing Henry "symptoms" with my good friend Dr R. N. Nanda of St Briavels. He also inclines to the diagnosis of *gangrenous ergotism* ; but at the same time suggests that *Thrombo Obliterans* ought not altogether to be ignored as a cause of death.

J. D. G. D.

## BOOK ONE

### BARON OF THE REALM

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#### CHAPTER ONE

##### THE LANCASTRIAN CONNECTION

In the XXXIII. yere [of Edward III.'s reign] John Gaunt, erl of Richemund, the son of Kyng Edward, weddid dam Blaunche, the doutir of the duk of Lancastir.

SUCH is a mediæval chronicler's record of a marriage which was destined to have a profound effect upon the history of England. Absent are those intimate details which nowadays are the essential ingredients of the report of a society wedding: they have to be garnered from odd sources, and even when stock of the harvest is taken disappointment must result.

The wedding of John of Gaunt, Earl of Richmond and fourth son of Edward III., by his most gracious and lovely queen, Philippa of Hainault, and Blanche, the younger of the two daughters and only children of Henry Plantagenet, 1st Duke of Lancaster, was solemnised in one of Reading's churches on May 19, 1359. Apparently the 'officiating minister' was a certain Thomas de Chynham, one of the chaplains of Queen Philippa: Robert Wyvil, Bishop of Salisbury, also attended the ceremony and pronounced the blessing.

It is known, too, that Edward III. contracted to spend about £200 [by modern values roughly £5000] on presents for the young couple. Having an almost feminine love of jewels and jewellery it was natural that some of the presents should take that form—a ring with a great ruby in it, a belt garnished with rubies, emeralds, and pearls, and a 'tryphod' with a cup of silver gilt. The precise form of

the Lady Blanche's gifts from her father is not known : one can be certain, nevertheless, that her dowry was commensurate with the social status which would come to her as a king's daughter-in-law. Edward III. must have been satisfied that the financial side of the contract was satisfactory long before the wedding actually took place.

At the outset, when the marriage was first contemplated and discussed, an obstacle had to be faced and surmounted : through common descent from Henry III. John and Blanche were related to each other within the degrees of consanguinity prohibited by the law of the Church. But the popes languished miserably in Avignon, and in such an atmosphere there was seldom inclination or readiness to adhere too rigidly to canonical principles. Thus, after the customary 'consideration' had been paid over to Innocent VI. a dispensation was forthcoming 'to remove the obstacle or let'—and the conscience of Holy Church was sufficiently satisfied to enable her priests to sanctify the union.

Reading celebrated the royal wedding for three days : it afforded a splendid opportunity for the display of pageantry and a round of merry-making. On the fourth day the royal party rode away to London, where Symon Donfylde, the mayor, John Chichester and Symon Radyngton, the sheriffs, and the aldermen had staged a magnificent tournament in John's and Blanche's honour. They ordered their herald to announce that London would hold the field against all comers—a pretty recognition of the claims of chivalry by a commercial community. The challenge was accepted ; and twenty-four knights, each wearing the coat-of-arms of the city of London, entered the arena, fought, and triumphed.

Great was the amazement and joy of the vast crowd when the knights uncovered. There, before them, stood Edward III., four of his sons [Edward, Prince of Wales, Lionel of Clarence, John of Gaunt, and Edmund of Langley], and nineteen of the chief noblemen of the kingdom.

The ladies threw their favours at the feet of the knights. The London journeymen and apprentices, always eager to make the most of a holiday, hurled their caps into the air, and cheered themselves hoarse.

What a truly wonderful man was this Edward ! Of his own volition he had taken upon himself the right to stand forth as London's champion. He had arrayed his sons and chief barons with him in conferring a signal honour upon the greatest and fairest city in the world. Could the Londoners, then as now peculiarly susceptible in civic pride, deny the king anything ? By his gracious act, on the occasion of his son's wedding, he had proudly acknowledged himself to be a Londoner : in the eyes of the crowd that would be an even greater distinction than ruler of England.

But when the incident is viewed in retrospect it is touched with irony. The time was to come when crowds of angry Londoners hurled curses at John of Gaunt, assaulted those who wore his livery, and danced with devilish delight as they watched the flames lick up and destroy the priceless treasures in the Lancastrian palace of the Savoy. They did not then pause to reflect that once upon a time John of Gaunt had been their city's champion. They were driven mad with the thought that he was casting covetous—even murderous—eyes upon the throne, and that in order to achieve his evil purpose he was willing to coquette with the heretic Wiclif, to insult London's bishop, and to attack the city's highly prized liberties. And—to anticipate—it is not an injustice to John of Gaunt to say that he earned the revulsion of feeling, if not perhaps by overt acts of treason or tyranny, by an obstinate refusal to depart from a policy which was bound to lead to popular misunderstanding.

At the time when the wedding took place in Reading, John of Gaunt was nineteen years old, and the Lady Blanche was his junior by about a year.

The immediate importance of the marriage lay chiefly

in the position which the parents of the young people held in the state.

England in 1359 basked in the greatness of her king. His exploits, the stock-in-trade of every school history book, were on the lips of his subjects. He had gone to war against the French: he had humbled the proud chivalry of that nation at Crecy in a manner which staggered Europe. Out of his loins had come brave sons, the eldest of whom had repeated his father's victories in a fight-against-odds at Poitiers. The men whom Edward and his son led to victory were 'the people of England'—gallant fellows who bore no arms upon their shields and wore little protection on their bodies; and these humble people learnt by contact with their captains that spirit of camaraderie, which is perhaps the only asset of war. Unconsciously they were subject to a process which nowadays is called democratisation: whereas in the scheme of things social they were accounted inferior to men who emblazoned arms on their shields and mounted crests on their basnets, they had shown the world and themselves that in war they were the equals of king and duke, count and seigneur. And when war was over these lessons were remembered and acted upon.

In 1359 Edward III. was at the peak of his power. He had not yet become the slave of lechery, the vice which in the end enfeebled his mind and besmirched his honour. It is true that the fierce independence of the English people, expressed through the medium of parliament, refused to yield to Edward those prerogatives of kingship enjoyed by his contemporaries in the other countries of Europe; but the resistance was never personal, and although king and parliament-men had their differences and quarrels they were never allowed to obscure the friendly relationships between Edward and his subjects. Englishmen were beginning to understand that politics is a game in which no matter what rivalries may be engendered, personal friendships can be retained inviolable.

Great though Edward III. assuredly was, the record of

his reign excites not only the highest admiration but also the lowest contempt. He was singularly short-sighted as a ruler of men. Richly blessed with sons, he found himself lacking the means of launching them successfully on the seas of life ; and he sought to make good the deficiency by means of marriages with rich heiresses who carried with them to the altar the power which lands and money gave in mediæval society. As a result, he raised up within the kingdom of England powerful families whose members could not escape from the fact that within their veins coursed royal blood. Such men found it difficult to live and act as ordinary citizens : they claimed for themselves favoured treatment—and often made good their claims by displays of force. The power which they had acquired through marriage gave them the means to act factiously : in the absence of a strong central government they were enabled to do serious damage to the body politic with comparative impunity.

There is no doubt at all that Edward III. exercised considerable care in choosing a wife for his son, John of Gaunt. But he could not know what great wealth and power would ultimately come to the young man as a result of his marriage with Blanche Plantagenet ; for when the wedding took place she was co-heiress, not heiress, of the great Duke of Lancaster.

Henry Plantagenet, 1st Duke of Lancaster, is one of the most fascinating figures in the history of fourteenth-century England. His contemporaries called him 'the Good Duke Henry' ; and the compliment was most richly deserved. Indeed, excepting Edward Black Prince, he was the most popular and the most powerful of Edward III.'s subjects. John Capgrave, who wrote a sketch of Henry Plantagenet's life in the fifteenth century, said of him :

On deeds of war he was so intent, and so circumspect in their conduct, that he was called 'The Father of Soldiers.' Whilst he was young, and the love of labour was esteemed pleasurable by him, he eagerly sought the foremost place in

all engagements with Pagans, Turks, or Saracens. Hence at first in Prussia, then at Rhodes, next at Cyprus, and many places in the East; then passing over Granada and parts of Spain, he either put to flight or slew those who held in contempt the Cross of Christ and Christ Himself. And in these wars, such was his glory and renown, that other young men of the world, the sons of French and German dukes and lords, were wont to wage war under his guidance and his banner. For by reason of the number of his forces, he was considered to be eminently the father of youths under instruction.

And though a man of war he also displayed the love of piety, so often met with in the lives of his ancestors. When in the evening of a busy life he laid aside his arms, 'the Good Duke Henry' devoted himself to good works: he founded churches and hospitals, and 'gave alms without ceasing.' He was the friend of the widow and the orphan; and in an age which expected no high standards of moral rectitude among the 'upper classes,' he found time and inspiration to enrich his generation with a little manual of devotion called *Mercy Gramercy*

wherein, as in some work of confession, he recalled to memory all his deeds seeking pardon from God for his faults; and this applies to that portion of the book which is entitled 'Concerning Pity.' But in the other part, which consists of acts of thanksgiving, he gives thanks to God for all the prosperity which had been bestowed on him.

Great political power, and a superabundance of riches, could not undermine the loyalty of Henry Plantagenet to the state: throughout his life he remained the dearest friend and most trusted counsellor of Edward III.

There is a tantalising obscurity about the early history of John of Gaunt's life. As his name suggests [when generous allowance is made for the Englishman's inherent inability either to pronounce or to spell foreign names correctly], he was born in Ghent, the Bradford of mediæval

Flanders, either about Christmas 1339 or early in 1340. Tradition avers that he was christened in the church of St Bavon in the city of his birth, and it is known that one of his godparents was the Flemish burgher leader, Jacques van Artevelde, who was a firm friend of Edward III., and probably persuaded him to put forward a claim to the French throne—a subtle move taken with the object of weakening the power of Francophile overlords in his native Flanders.

John of Gaunt's nurse was a certain Isolda Newman [one naturally suspects that this woman was a Fleming—Isolde Neumann], about whom nothing is known except that in 1346 she was given an annuity of £10—obviously for services in the royal nursery.

In later years a scandalous tale was told to the effect that John was not Edward's and Philippa's son at all; but a changeling, the child of a Flemish woman, who was introduced into the royal bed because Philippa had overlain her child and was afraid to tell her husband what she had done. The queen divulged these 'facts' to William of Wykeham in confessional, at the same time giving him permission to publish them should at any time John of Gaunt make an attempt to possess the throne of England.

Unscrupulous politicians can always be relied upon to stock the cupboards of their political opponents with sensational skeletons. The changeling story was banded around the taverns and cook-shops of London at the time when John of Gaunt and William of Wykeham were at loggerheads; and the Londoners were then ready to believe anything about the man whom they thought was determined to take away their cherished liberties.

What judgment has posterity to give on this story? There is no doubt that it was concocted by William of Wykeham with the object of discrediting his enemy: and that it was nothing more than a piece of malicious slander. Level-headed contemporaries apparently took the same view; for the story died a quick death, and it was never resuscitated [as most certainly would have happened had



it been widely believed] by the enemies of John of Gaunt's son, Henry IV.

At the age of three, John was granted by his father the earldom of Richmond—an honour which had belonged to the counts of Brittany, and for which they did homage to the King of England; and seven years later he saw his first battle. It was curiously enough a sea-fight: John was on board his eldest brother's ship when the English fleet was engaged by Castilians in the roads off Sluys, and on that occasion he came very near to death, so hotly pressed was his brother by the enemy. It was 'the Good Duke Henry' of Lancaster who rescued them from a dangerous situation.

It was 'the Good Duke Henry,' too, who admitted John to the order of knighthood on a campaign in Flanders in 1355; and in the following year, at Roxburgh, John witnessed Edward Baliol's ignominious surrender of the kingdom of Scotland [a kingdom which he was too feeble and unpopular to hold without English aid] into the hands of Edward III.

In 1357, when on a visit to his brother, Lionel, then Earl of Ulster in the right of his wife, the de Clare heiress, Elizabeth de Burgh, John of Gaunt had his first meeting with Geoffrey Chaucer. That was the beginning of a life-long friendship, which brought advantages to both, and enabled the precious poetry of Chaucer to be produced in the congenial atmosphere of the Lancastrian household.

It is to Chaucer that we are indebted for a lively picture of the Lady Blanche Plantagenet.

I saw hir daunce so comlily  
Carole and singe so swetely  
Laughe and pleye so womanly  
And loke so debonairly  
So goodly speke and so frendly.

Such a pretty memory Chaucer retained of a great lady whose virtues would have been conspicuous in the most

virtuous age. He immortalised the Lady Blanche as the 'Whyte Lady,' whose 'goodly softe speeche' charmed every one; and her eyes—so 'debonair, goode, glade and sadde'—reduced to slavery the strongest men. She was a blonde—and that went for much in an age which preferred blondes. She was tall and graceful, but nevertheless blessed with that comeliness of body which showed to such advantage in the tight-fitting bodices of the Middle Ages, and won unstinted praise from men.

A luckless year was 1348. In the early summer there made its appearance in England a filthy bubonic plague, which was quickly dubbed the Black Death on account of the dark, ill-natured blotches which it caused in the skin of the infected. It had come out of the East, and travelling with deadly sureness across the continent of Europe laid low rich and poor, cleric and layman, always preferring young to old bodies on which to wreck its havoc. In the narrow and insanitary streets of the towns, and the overcrowded and badly-ventilated homes of the poor, the germs lurked for years to come; and for about the space of twenty years the country suffered grievously from periodic outbreaks of the plague.

But it is an ill wind which blows no man good. Many could afford to bless the day when the plague came to England. It gave to William of Wykeham, for example, more than twenty fat benefices; and he was not alone in his good fortune. To John of Gaunt the plague eventually brought all the lands and treasures of the house of Lancaster, and was therefore responsible for his meteoric rise from the position of a penniless son of the King of England to that of his father's most powerful and richest subject.

About the middle of March 1361, Henry of Lancaster fell a victim to the plague, and died. The title of duke, his for life only, perished with him; but by the law of the land his vast estates and rich treasures went in equal shares to his two children—[1] Matilda, who had taken

as her second husband, William of Bavaria, Duke of Holland and Zealand, a son of the Emperor Lewis ; and [2] Blanche, who, as we know, was the wife of John of Gaunt.

Matilda came to England to take legal possession of her inheritance, but by tragic coincidence she took the plague, and died on Palm Sunday [April 10] 1362. In later years, when John of Gaunt had aroused the anger of the Londoners, and William of Wykeham was subtly hinting that he was a changeling, it was whispered that the Duchess Matilda had been hastened out of the world by poison ; and the slander inferred, as it was meant to infer, that John of Gaunt knew more about the administration of the poison than he would have cared the world to know ! It was the old tale of a man's good fortune being ascribed to base motives. As the Duchess Matilda died without issue, her share in the Lancastrian heritage passed to her younger sister, Blanche—and by the courtesy of marriage to her husband, John of Gaunt.

About a month after the death of 'the Good Duke Henry,' Edward III. [as if in anticipation of the good fortune which the fates had reserved for his son in consequence of his union with the daughter of Lancaster] advanced John of Gaunt to fill in the Order of the Garter the place vacant through the death of his illustrious father-in-law [April 1361]. Little more than a year later this highly favoured son, John, was the greatest man in the realm except the king himself and his eldest son, the Prince of Wales. John of Gaunt controlled in his own right the earldom of Richmond, and in the right of his wife the earldoms of Derby, Lancaster, Leicester, and Lincoln ; and in addition he was the Seneschal of England. Nor had he long to wait for ducal honours : in the parliament which met in November 1362 his royal father, 'girding him with the sword and setting the cap on his head,' created him Duke of Lancaster for the term of his life.

Thus, within four years of his marriage to Blanche

Plantagenet, John had risen to a position which gave him undisputed control of estates more extensive than those of any of his noble contemporaries. Far away in the west, in the vale of Towy in the county of Caermarthen, and in the north, along the Anglo-Scottish border, were dotted grim Lancastrian strongholds; and few were the shires of England in which the Lancastrian influence was not a force to be reckoned with.

The fief of Lancaster was invested with the peculiar privileges of a palatine earldom—privileges which made daring inroads on the authority of the central government. Within a marcher or palatine fief 'the King's Writ did not run': the lord marcher or palatine earl was the master of his own destiny. He could, and did, maintain private armies, which, unless checked by a strong king, he often used to the discomfort of his neighbours and the ruin of the countryside.

One glance at the extant lists of the retainers of Henry of Lancaster and John of Gaunt indicate the immense power of which they had control. In those lists will be found the names of men famed in their day for wisdom in council and skill in battle: their fortunes were tied up with those of the house of Lancaster, and consequently self-interest compelled loyalty.

'The Good Duke Henry' had used all these advantages in the best interests of his king and country. Would John of Gaunt emulate his example; or would he divert the Lancastrian power for the pursuit of personal ambitions? The answer to this question is the history of the closing years of Edward III.'s, and the opening years of Richard II.'s, reigns.

Whatever moral deterioration in character took place in the latter part of John of Gaunt's life there is no evidence to support the suggestion that he sullied his married life with Blanche of Lancaster by acts of infidelity. When in his 'teens, shortly before his marriage, he had had an affaire with a lady called Marie de Ste Hilaire, and as a result a

daughter, Elizabeth, was born. She was later married to Sir Thomas Morieux, who played a not-inconspicuous part in the events of his time.

Everything points to the fact that John and Blanche were ideally happy. They experienced the joy of parenthood within a year of their marriage, when Blanche was delivered of a daughter, whom they proudly named Philippa in honour of her paternal grandmother. Philippa of Lancaster became a queen and the mother of kings; for in 1387 she was married to John I. of Portugal [1385-1433], by whom she had seven sons and daughters. One son was Prince Henry the Navigator, who laid the foundations of the overseas empire of his country by a series of daring voyages; and a daughter, Isabella, by her marriage to Philip 'le Bon,' Duke of Burgundy, became the ancestress of the Spanish Habsburgs.

The second child born to John and Blanche was a son, whom they called John after his father; but the baby died soon after birth, and no comment is needed to relate the grief which the mother experienced in such a circumstance. The baby's death meant that the house of Lancaster still lacked an heir: the father must have been gravely concerned on that score.

Nor was John of Gaunt's disappointment removed when his duchess was brought to bed of her third child, about 1364. She was a girl, Elizabeth, who grew up to be the cause of much sorrow to her father. As a child he had betrothed her to John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke—a gallant young man who is worthy of being remembered for the protection which he gave to Froissart; but in her early twenties Elizabeth fell hopelessly in love with John Holland, a rather reckless character, who later was granted the earldom of Huntingdon and the duchy of Exeter; and so passionately did they pursue their illicit courtship that it soon became imperative for Elizabeth's father to secure a papal dispensation annulling the betrothal with Hastings in order to ensure the legitimacy of a grandchild. It is one of the tricks of history to find that John Holland was

sent to his death by the command of his wife's brother, Henry IV., against whose life he had conspired [1400]. Elizabeth, however, had no liking for widowhood: she took as a third husband John Cornwall, Baron Fanhope, a captain who won a great reputation in the French war of Henry V.'s reign.

There is still some dispute about the date of the birth of Henry, the fourth child of John and Blanche of Lancaster. Without entering into it, let us accept the date which seems at least to be reasonably certain—April 3, 1367. The accouchement took place in the Lancastrian castle of Bolingbroke, near Spilsby, in Lincolnshire; and thus it happened that contemporaries knew the boy as Henry of Bolingbroke. If April 3 is not challenged, then Henry of Bolingbroke's birth coincided with the great victory won by his uncle, Edward Black Prince, and his father, John of Gaunt, at Najera in Spain, as a result of which Pedro the Cruel was able to regain the throne of Castile from his bastard brother, Enrique or Henry of Trastamara. Najera was a victory which aroused the wildest enthusiasm in England: it had been most hardly fought and brilliantly won; and it again persuaded the Englishman that he had no equal in the business of making war. Some time must have elapsed before John of Gaunt heard the news of Henry of Bolingbroke's birth: at last he had an heir, in whom would be perpetuated the honours and lands of Lancaster.

In the following year [1368] Blanche of Lancaster gave birth to another male child. He was named John; but once again the fates dealt the parents a cruel blow, for the baby died a few days later. But John and Blanche were still in the vigour of youth: they might make good the ravages of fate by the procreation of other male children. That, however, was not to be.

Another disastrous outbreak of plague [the people called it 'the third pestilence'] swept across England in the summer of 1369. In the middle of August it laid low

the beloved queen, Philippa of Hainault, whom Froissart described as

la plus gentil roine, plus large et plus courtoise que oncques  
regna en son temps.

The tribute accurately echoed the sentiments of her husband's subjects.

A month later, on September 12, the plague carried off Blanche of Lancaster, who was Philippa's only rival as the embodiment of perfect womanhood. Within a month England was bereft of two great ladies: that knowledge cast a gloom of despair over the country.

John of Gaunt was in Picardy on active service when Blanche died; and it is to the works of the poet attached to his household that we must turn to take just measure of his grief. For there is little doubt that Chaucer's 'man in blak . . . a wonder wel-faringe knight' in the *Booke of the Duchess* is John of Gaunt. The sorrow of the 'man in blak' was inconsolable: it paralysed him, so that as he sat beneath a tree mourning his loss he wished that Death had taken him with his lady.

I have of sorwe so gret woon,  
That joye gete [will get] never noon,  
Now that I see my lady bright,  
Which I have loved with al my might,  
Is fro me deed, and is a-goon.

Allas, o deeth! what ayleth thee,  
That thou noldest [wouldst not] have taken me,  
Whan that thou toke my lady swete?  
That was so fayre, so fresh, so free,  
So good, that men may well y-see  
Of al goodnesse she had no mete!

It cannot be expected that Henry of Bolingbroke realised the full force of the sorrow which enshrouded his home: indeed it is very doubtful whether he could ever conjure up a physical recollection of his mother, so young

was he when she died. Nevertheless, throughout his life he honoured her memory in the way which convention demanded: that was the least he could do. His two sisters were old enough to share after the manner of children in the grief of their father. They were already in the charge of a lady of Hainault, Katherine Swynford, who eventually became their stepmother when John of Gaunt made her his third duchess.

Victims of the plague were always hastily buried, and it is very unlikely, therefore, that John of Gaunt was present at the obsequies of the Duchess Blanche. It would fall to the lot of the household officers to see that the funeral was fittingly carried out. The body of their mistress was laid to rest near the High Altar in 'Paul's Church' in the heart of the city of London; and all the demands of Holy Church—the endowment of priests to say the obits and the provision of tapers—were carefully carried out. In a little time John of Gaunt had a splendid alabaster tomb, on which was a sculptured effigy of his wife, raised on the grave; and year after year on her death-day the members of the Lancastrian household went to 'Paul's Church' to pay tribute to the memory of one whom they had known as a genuine friend.

With John of Gaunt the sweet memory of Blanche outlasted the ambitions and pleasures of two subsequent marriages; and when on February 3, 1398, he made his last will and testament he embodied in it a wish—

to be buried in the cathedral church of S. Paul in London,  
near the chief altar, beside my most dear late wife Blanche.

Doubtless at the end of a singularly full life, like any other man, he found time for regrets; and the bitterest of them all would be the brevity of his first marriage—a marriage which brought him love and wealth and power. That regret is poignantly expressed by Chaucer in the words of the 'man in blak':

to litel whyl our blisse lasteth.

. . . . .



It has been shrewdly observed that the luck of John of Gaunt changed with the death of the Duchess Blanche. While she was alive all went well with him ; but after her death the grinning face of failure mocked him ; and the world meted out to him the treatment which it reserves for failures. He shaped his destiny unskillfully, almost viciously : uncurbed ambition, heightened by a conviction that he was destined for the purple, changed him into a man of factiousness, who was not ashamed to dabble in treason—or something which has all the outward appearances of treason. In John of Gaunt can be seen the ‘ overmighty subject ’ who did irreparable damage to his own order and brought suffering and misery upon his country. He harked back to the days when the king was *primus inter pares* : he endeavoured to challenge the prerogatives of kingship, not because he thought they were being exercised to the hurt of the kingdom, but because they were a check upon his own ambitions. John of Gaunt, as has already been said, wanted to be a king : when he failed to find a kingdom for himself in Spain he directed his attention to his native land, and if he did not actually assume the rôle of usurper it was because the people of England made it clear that they wanted ‘ no king called John.’

A great baron in the Middle Ages could not escape the obligations of public service. Within a year of the death of the Duchess Blanche, John of Gaunt was in Aquitaine, serving with his eldest brother, Edward Black Prince. Things were going badly with them. The cunning tactics of French captains of the school of Bertrand du Guesclin wore down the morale of the English soldiery : the government in Paris did everything in its power to embarrass the English without openly violating the peace : as a result of misgovernment and cruelty the duchy of Aquitaine was seething with discontent and disloyalty. Early in 1370 one of the ablest of the English captains, Sir John Chandos, fell in battle. This man had been the military tutor of Edward III.’s sons ; and he had not only made them

proficient in the use of arms but won from them respect for his judgment and counsel. A greater misfortune was the ill-health of Edward Black Prince, for a sick man is subject to fits of irritability which distort his judgments and actions. It was sickness which drove Edward to commit one of the blackest acts in the annals of the later Middle Ages—the sack of Limoges.

John of Gaunt arrived in Bordeaux in 1370 at the time when his eldest brother was about to march against Limoges, which, through the treachery of its bishop, Jean de Cros, had renounced its allegiance to the English and openly acclaimed the King of France as its rightful suzerain. Edward Black Prince was resolved to take a terrible vengeance on Limoges: once he gained admission to the town he sent forth his men to slay and burn, rape and rob, to their hearts' content; and so ruthlessly did they behave that few of the inhabitants escaped with their lives from the horrible carnage. Edward would have put Jean de Cros to death, and thereby incurred the enmity of Holy Church, had not John of Gaunt asked for the bishop's life.

Too ill to think of governing Aquitaine in person, too ill even to delay his departure from Bordeaux to bury his eldest son, Edward, a little fellow of six, who died as he was about to embark with his father for England, Edward Black Prince made John of Gaunt his deputy in the unhappy duchy. John's first official duty was to arrange for the burial of his nephew. It was a duty which must have quickened within his breast thoughts of his proximity to the throne of England. To his credit John of Gaunt made a brave show of governing justly a province which since the senseless sack of Limoges held the English rule in horror and detestation; but the home government sent him no funds, and he was quite unable to squeeze taxes out of a people whose byres were in ruins and lands laid waste. By July 1371 John of Gaunt had had enough of the duchy of Aquitaine: he was resolved to hand over his lieutenancy to others. Perhaps this decision was not disinterested: he may have wanted his hands free to contract another

marriage, and one which would involve him in affairs in Spain.

After the victory of Najera, Pedro the Cruel returned to his kingdom of Castile ; but his reckless contempt for feudal conventions and savage punishments of those who dared to oppose his will so alienated his subjects that they were heartily glad to welcome back the usurper, the Bastard of Trastamara ; and there were few regrets when Pedro was stabbed to death by his half-brother.

Pedro left three daughters—Beatrice, Constance, and Isabella. Before Najera, during the time that he was in enforced exile from his native land, he had placed them in the custody of English friends in Bordeaux ; and there they had remained ever since. Beatrice took the veil, and died in 1368 : her rights, therefore, passed to her sister, Constance.

Constance was a proud and spirited girl, who chafed under the enforced exile at Bordeaux and burned with a mad desire to revenge her father's death. But she possessed no money ; and the financing of a military expedition was a costly business. By marriage alone could she hope to carry through her purpose ; and there were few more suitable candidates for such a dangerous undertaking than John of Gaunt.

Constance's determination to rid Castile of the usurper, Enrique, and to rule in his stead, suited John of Gaunt's ambitions. Why should he dissipate a private fortune in trying to maintain his eldest brother's authority in Aquitaine when the money might be used to place him on the throne of Castile ? According to Froissart [it must be admitted that he is not always a reliable witness] the question of a marriage with Constance was discussed by John of Gaunt's council ; and by them he was urged to go through with the business. Thus, in September 1371, at Rocqufort he married Constance, and won the right to style himself ' King of Castile and Leon.'

There was great excitement in England when the royal

party progressed from Plymouth to London in the following month. All along the route, crowds gathered to see 'Monseigneur d'Espagne' and the 'Queen of Castile.' It was curiosity rather than enthusiasm which brought the crowds together: Englishmen have always been reluctant to acclaim marriages which might conceivably involve their country in foreign wars. Thinking people in England in 1371 cannot fail to have realised that the marriage of John of Gaunt and Constance of Castile would inevitably revitalise the Franco-Castilian alliance made in 1369; and if, as a result of Najera, Englishmen were contemptuous of the military power of Castile they could not entertain similar feelings about the Castilian sailors whose exploits in the Channel had successfully challenged the English mastery of the seas.

It was soon made apparent that John of Gaunt was resolved to oust Enrique from Castile and Leon and to rule these kingdoms in the right of his wife. In 1372 he concluded a treaty of alliance with the Portuguese court; and at the same time he was busily engaged in raising money to equip an expeditionary force for service in the Iberian Peninsula. He quickly perceived that great though his private resources were they were unequal to the purpose which he had in his mind: it was imperative that he should secure the assistance of his father's kingdom. But John of Gaunt knew that Englishmen would not embark on a war to be waged solely for the profit of the Duke of Lancaster. The Lancastrian and national interests must be made to appear coincident. What would be easier than to announce that his expeditionary force would march against the French? And when the French had been terrorised into submission the force could be led into Spain to punish France's Castilian friends.

It was a cunningly thought-out scheme, and few people saw through it. A mighty armament was mustered; and the clergy were commanded to pray for the success of the venture. In May 1373 John of Gaunt named the 'executors' who were to safeguard his interests during his absence

from England ; and two months later arrangements were completed for the Lancastrian castle at Tutbury to be the residence of ' the Queen of Castile ' and his children by Blanche of Lancaster.

' A midsummer madness ' is the apt description given to this megalomaniacal scheme by one of John of Gaunt's biographers. Landing at Calais with as fine an army as ever marched into the lands of the King of France, John of Gaunt at once set out to fight the Frenchmen. But the Breton, Bertrand du Guesclin, had taught his fellow-countrymen the value of ' masterly inactivity,' and John of Gaunt found that there was no enemy to fight. As the English ploughed their way laboriously through the French countryside they were subjected to those pinpricks which quickly undermine discipline and destroy morale. Bands of Frenchmen hung upon the rear and flanks of the advancing army, dashing forward to cut down stragglers or to destroy the baggage waggons. As soon as the Frenchmen knew the route which the English army would follow they devastated the country through which it lay so ruthlessly that the invaders found it impossible to procure the ordinary necessities of life. Men and horses died ; the faint-hearted took refuge in desertion ; and a terrible despondency overcame the army. From Calais to Troyes, from Troyes to Montsalvy, from Montsalvy to Bordeaux, the English struggled forward, never once coming to grips with the main French army. Outside Montsalvy a muster was taken : only 8000 men remained of the 15,000 who had marched out of Calais ; and it was at the head of a derelict army that John of Gaunt entered Bordeaux at the end of December 1373.

Curiously enough, Frenchmen praised John of Gaunt for his steadfastness of purpose and brilliant leadership in so hopeless an undertaking ; but Englishmen cursed him for a failure, through whom England's honour was brought into contempt. The popular resentment increased with every dispatch from France : it was clearly impressed upon the national mind that departed was the glory which

had been won on the fields of Crécy and Poitiers ; and it was hinted that failure was the result of misappropriation of public monies.

John of Gaunt remained some weeks in Bordeaux before sailing for home, hoping perhaps that with the passing of time feeling against him in England would die down. But his hopes were shattered. On reaching England he was at once relieved of his command, and was compelled to retire under a cloud to his castle at Hertford. There he remained for nearly a year, taking no part in public affairs, and now and then visiting his extensive estates with his wife and children : and enjoying, too, the companionship of the notorious Katherine Swynford.

The king's dotage and his eldest son's fatal illness made it impossible for them to take their places in the councils of the nation ; and the direction of affairs as a result passed into other hands. To assert the right to enjoy the privileges of their order, even though they conflicted with law and custom, was the ambition of every great nobleman ; and in such an atmosphere the factiousness of the ' overmighty subject ' flourished. It would have been suicidal for John of Gaunt to have remained aloof from the political affairs of the realm ; and about March 1375 he staged ' a come-back ' by obtaining employment as the leader of an embassy appointed to discuss peace terms with the French. His efforts were successful : in June he was able to negotiate a truce of one year's duration. But his enemies pursued him relentlessly ; and the expenses incurred by the embassy were held up as a further proof of his extravagant use of the people's money.

It was in the parliament which assembled in April 1376 [and known to us as ' the Good Parliament '] that the full force of his enemies' attack was delivered against him. The Commons had chosen as their Speaker, Peter de la Mare, an estimable man who was one of the knights of the shire for Hereford ; and through him they made a spirited attack on the royal ministers, charging them with mis-

management and, in some cases, speculation. Speaker de la Mare drove home the attack without fear : he observed that the conduct of military affairs had been disastrously undertaken, and boldly asserted that Edward III. was in the toils of greedy and corrupt ministers. The 'faithful Commons' loved their king, but it grieved them to know that he was so badly served : if he would graciously consent to redress the grievances of which they complained they would readily grant him the supplies which he requested.

In that parliament John of Gaunt was Edward III.'s deputy and the leader of the 'court party.' He was irritated by the tone of Speaker de la Mare's speech ; but none the less he promised that if the Commons made known their grievances he would do his utmost to secure their redress. The Speaker took him at his word : he called for the impeachment of the Chamberlain, William, Lord Latimer, and Richard Lyons, a rich London merchant, on the ground that both men had appropriated public funds to their own use ; and when John, Lord Nevil of Raby, rose in his place and told the parliament-men that they were running grave risks by attacking members of the royal household they retaliated with the rejoinder that they would presently deal with him in a similar way ; and the Speaker immediately prayed for Nevil's removal from the office of Steward of the King's Household. But that was not the length of the indictment : an uncompromising attack was then delivered against Alice Perrers, the mistress of Edward III. and the most powerful person in the kingdom ; and it was resolved that not only should she be banished from the court but also should forfeit all her property.

Never before had the parliament-men shown such independence ; and it has frequently been suggested that their courage on this occasion was inspired by Edward Black Prince, who was so distressed at the condition of the realm that he advocated reform. But it is doubtful whether that is an accurate estimate of the position : for

some years Edward Black Prince had withdrawn from public life. At the same time it is unbelievable that the attack would have been so forcibly delivered unless the parliament-men were assured of considerable external support; and it is more than probable that the power behind them was the city of London.

It was when the parliamentary quarrel was at its height that the nation was plunged into mourning by the death of Edward Black Prince. Looking back upon his life and work, one is surprised at the popularity which he enjoyed in his lifetime: admittedly he was a brilliant soldier when judged by his victories at Poitiers and Najera; but politically he was a dull person, and his behaviour at Limoges proves that he could not rise above the inherent cruelty of his age. His death was the more deplored because his fellow-countrymen regarded him as the one hope of a return to strong governance. Edward III.'s life was drawing to a close; and then the throne would pass to Edward Black Prince's younger and only surviving son, Richard, born at Bordeaux in 1367.

It is indicative of the popular nervousness about the succession that certain members of 'the Good Parliament' insisted that the boy prince should be brought into the assembly: it was a move deliberately taken in order to make it clear that Richard was Edward's heir. By whom did they think the succession would be challenged? John of Gaunt? Rightly or wrongly there was a feeling in the country that he meant to claim the right to succeed to the throne on his father's death, to the exclusion of the boy Richard; and no outward protestations of loyalty to his nephew would shake that conviction in certain quarters.

The parliament-men had hardly reached their respective constituencies when John of Gaunt showed his hand. On his own initiative he declared that the acts of 'the Good Parliament' were null and void; he dismissed the council appointed in that parliament; gave back the offices to the recently impeached ministers; and allowed Alice Perrers to return to the court. Thereupon he proceeded to attack



two men who had taken a prominent part in the parliamentary attack upon the 'court party'—Peter de la Mare and William of Wykeham. The former was imprisoned in Nottingham castle: the latter was forbidden to come within twenty miles of the court and forfeited the temporalities of his see.

The career of William of Wykeham merits a digression. He was born of humble parents at Wickham about 1324. He entered the royal service about 1347, and so impressed was the king by his administrative ability that he quickly advanced him to high political office and showered rewards upon him. He was made successively Joint Surveyor of Windsor Forest, Chief Warden and Surveyor of the royal strongholds at Windsor, Dover, Leeds, and Hadleigh, and Joint Warden of Forests south of the Trent. Rich ecclesiastical benefices were granted to him long before he was ordained; and when in 1367 the see of Winchester fell vacant, it was bestowed upon William—not, be it added, without some demur from the side of the papacy. From 1368 to 1371 in the capacity of Chancellor he had directed the government; but there was a popular outcry against clerical ministers, and William resigned office rather than embarrass his king.

Froissart was struck by the immense influence which William exerted over Edward III.

There reigned a priest in England called Sir William de Wiccan . . . so much in favour with the king that by him everything was done and without him they did nothing.

Moreover, William of Wykeham at one time enjoyed the confidence of the members of the royal family, and only three years before the meeting of 'the Good Parliament,' when about to set out on 'the Great Raid' through France, John of Gaunt named him as one of the executors to safeguard his vast interests in England.

What, then, caused the change in their relationships? It does at least appear that William of Wykeham genuinely

tried to thwart John of Gaunt's ambitions in so far as they were subversive of loyalty; and as a bishop he could not altogether ignore the way in which the enemies of Holy Church were harboured in the Lancastrian household. The admirers of John of Gaunt scorn the suggestion that he played with treason; but such a view cannot be sustained in the light of the knowledge that the members of 'the Good Parliament' were fearful of the future of the Prince Richard; and whether that fear was justified or not the way in which John of Gaunt took his revenge upon the opponents of the 'court party' made it patent to all that he was not the man to stop at half-measures.

His grudge against William of Wykeham was that he had led the attack on Latimer, a man bound by strong ties to the Lancastrian faction. Once the bond of friendship was broken he would share the aristocrats' contempt for a man who by ability had usurped their functions in the inner councils of the crown. The vengeance was thorough.

They hunted the said bishop from place to place both by letters and by writtes, so that no man could succour him throughout his diocese, neither could he, neither durst he, rest in any place; and therefore he then brake up household and scattered his men and dismissed them, for he could no longer governe and meynteyn them; sending also to Oxford, whear upon almose and for God's sake he found [*i.e.* maintained] sixty scollers, that they should depart and remove every one to their frendes, for he could no longer helpe or finde them; and so they all departed in great sorow and discomfort, weeping and with simple cheer.

The mention of the 'sixty scollers' at once connects William of Wykeham's name with two important educational foundations—'St Marie College of Wynchestre in Oxenforde' [now New College] and the school at Winchester. The former was founded in 1379 to enable the Winchester boys to obtain a university education: a fact not so widely known is that as early as 1361 or 1362 William of Wykeham

secured control of an educational institution in the University of Oxford—Trillek Hall, which he bought on the death of Bishop John de Trillek of Hereford [1344-1361]. The 'sixty scollers' who suffered so grievously when the vengeance of John of Gaunt descended upon their patron were in all probability resident at Trillek Hall.

But John of Gaunt had not taken accurate measure of the strength of the forces arrayed against him. The people looked upon Peter de la Mare as a martyr who had boldly attacked abuses in high places in order to safeguard cherished popular rights. The treatment of William of Wykeham and the protection which John of Gaunt gave to John Wiclif at once gave rise to the suspicion that an anti-clerical movement was about to be begun. It was a challenge not to be ignored by the bishops of the Church in England.

The need of money by the government necessitated the calling of a parliament. John of Gaunt was careful to ensure that the parliament-men who rode to London in January 1377 were his creatures; but, despite the precautions which had been taken in this direction, voices were raised in the assembly protesting vehemently against the recent despotic acts, and above the hubbub which followed when the Lancastrian nominees tried to howl their opponents down could be heard the demand that Speaker de la Mare ought to be given a fair trial.

It was William Courtenay, Bishop of London, who took the first step towards bringing matters to a head. He was no parvenu bishop, but the son of the Earl of Devon, and he could count on considerable support in the ranks of the nobility. The ban which prevented William of Wykeham from coming within twenty miles of the court made it impossible for him to attend the meeting of Convocation which was held in London at the beginning of February 1377. Led by William Courtenay, the majority of the bishops of the province of Canterbury refused to transact business until their 'brother of Winchester' was in his

place. They appealed direct to Edward III., who granted their request.

In the first hand the honours were held by the bishops. They thereupon proceeded to play more courageously. Inspired by William Courtenay they cited John Wiclif to appear before them to answer charges brought against him. At this stage the bishops were not so much alarmed at Wiclif's heretical opinions as at his connection with the anti-clerical party of which John of Gaunt was the avowed protector. The action which they had taken would compel him to come out into the open at a time when his stock was at the lowest level with the people.

John of Gaunt stood loyally by Wiclif. He briefed four friars to conduct his defence; and on the day of the trial [February 19] with Henry Percy, later to be created Earl of Northumberland and already Marshal of England, he escorted Wiclif to St Paul's, in which the bishops were to hear the case. It would be difficult to imagine a more distressing and disorderly scene than that which took place within the cathedral. Percy's brutal treatment of those who stood in his path called forth Bishop Courtenay's fury; and when he ordered him to desist, John of Gaunt intervened and bluntly informed the bishop that Percy would not take orders from him. The threats uttered by John of Gaunt and Henry Percy brought the London mob to the bishop's side: they cursed the two champions of Wiclif and compelled them to withdraw from the cathedral. It was impossible to try John Wiclif that day.

By next morning the wrath of the Londoners had increased rather than diminished. Learning that Percy held a citizen prisoner in the Marshalsea they rushed there to rescue their luckless comrade; and when they had achieved their purpose, they ransacked Percy's house from garret to cellar. When they failed to lay their hands upon Percy, they sought him in the Savoy; and they would have sacked John of Gaunt's magnificent palace had not Bishop Courtenay intervened. It would have gone

badly with John of Gaunt and Henry Percy had they fallen into the hands of the mob that day : the Londoners had murder in their hearts. And both men realised the danger, for as soon as they learnt of the happenings at the Marshalsea and the Savoy [they happened to be dining with a rich London merchant, John d'Ypres, when the news came] they made away with all speed by boat to Kennington to take refuge in the house of the Princess Joan, the widow of Edward Black Prince.

The Princess at once sent three members of her household [Sir Simon Burley, Sir Lewis Clifford, and Sir Aubrey de Vere] to reason with the Londoners ; but their overtures were met with the insistent demand that William of Wykeham and Peter de la Mare must have justice ; and they returned to Kennington with the news that the Londoners were resolved ' to have the traitor wherever he was found.' And was there any doubt in their minds as to whom the term ' traitor ' referred ? In more than one place in the city the mob had reversed the arms of Lancaster—the customary indignity for a traitor.

The citizens' leaders in London insisted upon seeing Edward III. in order personally to explain to him the cause of the tumult. It was occasioned, they said, by the fear that their liberties were in danger ; and although they did not mention John of Gaunt's name they left no doubt in the king's mind from what quarter that fear came. Edward III. received them with his accustomed graciousness : their fears were unfounded—indeed it was the royal intention to extend their privileges ! The civic heads withdrew satisfied, at the same time promising to punish those unruly persons who had insulted the Duke of Lancaster—as soon as they were able to apprehend them !

The excitement died down, but the resentment against John of Gaunt was not killed. In the minds of the vast majority of people was fixed the belief that John of Gaunt meant to usurp the throne on his father's death ; and they clung steadfastly to that opinion. The opposition of the bishops, convinced that John of Gaunt was the enemy

of the faith, gave the anti-Lancastrian movement strength and respectability.

And the man whom he hated most bitterly played him at his own game and beat him. William of Wykeham knew that the power behind the throne belonged to the woman Perrers ; and he was not ashamed to buy her favour in order to secure the restoration of his temporalities.

John of Gaunt never forgave Alice Perrers. He had brought her back to court when 'the Good Parliament' had banished her : instead of showing gratitude for what he had done she had assisted his bitterest enemy.

'Grieuouslie vexed with sickness from daie to daie,' Edward III. was hastening towards the grave. He was now so childish that he was unable to concentrate upon the business of his kingdom : his one interest in life was dalliance with the woman Perrers. His son, John of Gaunt, brought him no solace : so deeply absorbed was he in the pursuit of his own ambitions that he was not even present at his father's bedside when the end came on June 21, 1377. There is something indescribably tragic about the end of the 'great Edward.' In a pathetic loneliness he went to his grave : before he had breathed his last, Alice Perrers had made off, forcing the rings from his fingers and gathering together as many valuables as she could lay her hands upon ; and not knowing which way the wind would blow, and eager to trim their sails to their own advantage, all the members of the royal household at Sheen fled. Only one chaplain remained behind to close the dead king's eyes.

One mediæval chronicler gave a just estimate of Edward's life :

For as in hys bygynnyng all thynges were Joyfull an lykyng to hym and to all the peple ; and in his myd age he passed all men in high Joye and worshype and blessydnesse ; Ryghte so, whan he drow into Age, drawyng downward thurgh lecchorye and other synnes, litill and litill al the Jofull and blyssed thynges, good fortune and prosperitie decressed and

myshapped, and Infortunat thynges, and unprofytable harmes, with many evele, bygan for to sprynge, and, the more harm is, conteyned longe tyme after.

But the majority of Edward's subjects would have been more generous. They could never forget that whatever his faults he had been always gracious and courteous to his people: they could never forget the victory which he had won at Creçy—a victory which was talked about from one end of Europe to another. If in his latter years an enfeebled mind had detracted from his manly vigour, then was not that a proof that whom God loveth He chasteneth? Public opinion on Edward III. was accurately interpreted by Froissart.

He was a good king to them: never had they the like since the time of King Arthur who was aforetime King of England.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE COUSINS

SHORTLY before his death, Edward III. summoned to a grand feast in his castle of Windsor the Knights of the Order of the Garter, and in the presence of that illustrious company he advanced to the two vacancies in the order his grandsons, Richard of Bordeaux and Henry of Bolingbroke. [April 23, 1377.]

Except that they were of the blood royal, these boys had no claim to be numbered among a company which the old king liked to think of as the lineal descendants of the Round Table. Neither Richard nor Henry had won fame on the field of battle: both were too young to play any part in the business of the council chamber. But the day would come when one would be proclaimed King of England, and the other would be the greatest subject in his realm. They were of the same age: they had often played together.

The old king doubtless thought that a friendship so happily begun might continue throughout life to the great advantage of the realm.

As soon as the news reached London that Edward III. 'could not escape his sickness,' the citizens sent a deputation to wait upon Prince Richard who was in his mother's care at Kingston-upon-Thames. The city spokesman, John Philpot, assured the boy prince that the Londoners were ready to accept him as

their lawful king and *gouvernour* immediatlie after it should please God to call to his *mercie* his grandfather.



Philpot then went on to express the hope that an end would be made

of the discord betwixt the citizens and the duke of Lancaster, which through the malice of some had been raised, to the commoditie of none, but to the discommoditie of diuerse.

The Londoners had made their position clear. By professing loyalty to Prince Richard they had warned John of Gaunt that the city would lend no help in an act of usurpation; and with a fine magnanimity they had expressed a wish to be reconciled with him. It was a move wisely taken.

John of Gaunt was compelled to accept the inevitable. A day or so after the death of Edward III. the boy king formally composed the quarrel between his uncle and the Londoners; and that was followed by a reconciliation with William of Wykeham and the release of Peter de la Mare. To all outward appearances the reign of Richard II. was happily begun.

Fifty years had rolled by since the crowning of a king had been seen in England. It was decided, therefore, that the coronation of Richard of Bordeaux should be made the occasion of a magnificent spectacle and a happy holiday.

The ceremony took place on July 16. In his capacity as Marshal, Sir Henry Percy saw to it that the route along which the royal procession would pass was kept free from obstruction. At the head of the procession walked John of Gaunt, carrying the *curtana* or pointless sword of mercy—a duty which was his by right of the duchy of Lancaster; and he was attended by his only son and heir, Henry of Bolingbroke. Behind them came Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, the king's cousin by marriage to Philippa, only child of the dead Lionel of Clarence: he bore another words of state. Then followed Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, with the coronation spurs; and with them were the king's uncles, Edmund of Langley, Earl of Cambridge, and

Thomas of Woodstock, each with a sceptre crowned with a dove.

'Fair among men as another Absalom': such was the impression which an eye-witness, Adam Usk, had of the boy king. Behind Richard walked Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of the Church.

The magnificence of the ceremonial delighted the Londoners: they cheered themselves hoarse as the king went by; and in their excitement forgot the enmities of the past, even cheering John of Gaunt and Henry Percy. They had frustrated the former's plans: they could afford to be generous in the hour of victory.

The religious ceremony was followed by the customary banquet—a tedious affair for a young boy to sit through. It was Richard fitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, who waited upon him, for with his earldom went the honour of acting as butler on state occasions; and in the hall were crowded the great men of the realm, barons and bishops, who from henceforward were the subjects of the boy king. No doubt justice was done to the dishes which the mediæval cooks prepared with such cunning; and in the streets outside the royal palace the journeymen and apprentices carried on their antics, not a few getting uproariously drunk on the wine which flowed from the fountains and conduits of the city.

Richard's first public act was to create four new peers. Henry Percy received the earldom of Northumberland; Thomas Mowbray, the earldom of Nottingham; Guiscard d'Angoulême, the earldom of Huntingdon; and Thomas of Woodstock, the earldom of Buckingham. Strangely enough, Edward III. had omitted to confer a title on his youngest son, and the omission caused Thomas considerable bitterness, as well it might, for his other brothers had been generously honoured.

Three days after the coronation there was set up a council to guide the boy king. John of Gaunt had no place in it; but William Courtenay had. Once again

it is made clear that people believed that the 'Lancastrian influence' would be hurtful to the royal interests.

When the first parliament of the reign assembled in London on October 13, 1377, the parliament-men at once elected Sir Peter de la Mare as Speaker; but with uncommon good sense they refrained from taking vengeance on John of Gaunt for the way in which he had overridden 'the Good Parliament' and victimised de la Mare. Indeed, when they came to nominate an advisory committee to watch parliamentary interests in the king's government the name of John of Gaunt was unanimously put forward.

This produced a memorable scene in the House. Leaving his place in the assembly, John of Gaunt walked to the throne, and from his knees craved Richard to allow him to speak. The permission was willingly given.

There were rumours, said the Duke, to the effect that he wished to seize the throne for himself and his heirs. If those rumours were true, then he was guilty of the most heinous offence against the king—treason; and as a traitor he deserved no mercy. But he was no traitor: the rumours which were circulating throughout the realm were false, and if any man dared to repeat them in his face he would make him prove his words by wager of battle. He was not ungrateful to the parliament-men for the honour which they had done him in nominating him as a member of the advisory committee; but until he had cleared himself of these base charges of disloyalty to his sovereign and country he could not accept a public office.

None of the members expected that speech, and for a moment the assembly was dumbfounded. Some members tried to pour oil upon the troubled waters by suggesting that John of Gaunt had taken the matter far too seriously. They were sure that none in the parliament believed the libels, and for this reason they trusted that he would reconsider his decision and accept membership of the committee in question.

To the joy of all, John of Gaunt allowed himself to be pacified ; but probably on grounds of expediency he did not immediately take a prominent part in public affairs.

England was in a sorry state when Richard II. ascended the throne. Her military glory had departed. In the north the Scots were on the warpath ; the French talked about an invasion of England, and in the Narrow Seas their ships did great hurt to the English merchant shipping.

In the summer of 1378, therefore, John of Gaunt was commissioned to seek out and destroy a French fleet which was operating in the Channel under the command of Jean Vienne. The French, too wise to risk an open battle, ran for safety into harbour. John of Gaunt thereupon decided to try his luck on land by besieging St Malo ; but as a result of the careless vigilance of his chief of staff, Richard fitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, the defenders made a successful sortie and destroyed the English mining works. There was nothing for it but to raise the siege and return to England. And to return with another failure to John of Gaunt's charge.

St Malo might have done John of Gaunt little damage had he not at once involved himself in another quarrel with the bishops. Royal officers had shamefully violated the Church's privilege of sanctuary, and murder had been done within the sacred precincts of the abbey church at Westminster. William Courtenay fearlessly laid the ban of Holy Church upon the murderers and all who were in any way implicated in the crime ; and by doing this made a definite attack on the king's government.

In the king's name, therefore, William Courtenay was summoned to Windsor to explain his action before a meeting of the council. The summons was ignored—probably the bishop feared treachery. John of Gaunt, lately returned from St Malo, was furious at the contumacy of his old enemy, and in the council announced that he

would gladly go to London and fetch that disobedient prelat in spite of those ribauds.

When the Londoners heard of the Duke's words, their anger against him knew no bounds. 'Ribauds' were they? The insult touched the civic [always a very sensitive] pride. Once again scurrilous lampoons against John of Gaunt were circulated in the streets and taverns; his retinue were abused; and the tale was sent round that the English failure at St Malo was not due to the careless guard of Arundel but was the result of peculations by the Duke of the monies voted for the expedition. Echoes of this charge were heard in the parliament which assembled in Gloucester in October 1378; but a satisfactory account was rendered, and in parliament John of Gaunt's name was cleared. Outside parliament, however, people believed the worst of him—and there was plenty of scandal to pick and choose from.

John of Gaunt must have cursed a public opinion which judged him so unjustly: nevertheless he retired to his estates, deciding to remain there until the wave of unpopularity had spent its force. In the summer of 1380 the government requested him to lead an expedition against the Scots whose depredations in the northern districts of the kingdom were particularly annoying; and when he marched northwards he took with him his only son, Henry of Bolingbroke, then in his fourteenth year, but old enough to look forward to an adventure in which he could prove his worth as a soldier. Great must have been the boy's disappointment when his father resolved to gain his ends by negotiations rather than by fighting.

There was disappointment in another quarter; but it was the sort of disappointment which gives rise to anger. In London, John of Gaunt's enemies said that he was afraid to fight, being no better than 'a carpet knight'; and so intense was their hatred of him that they accused him of leading his men into battle from the rear! Nothing short of a spectacular victory like Crécy or Poitiers would have satisfied the London populace—and even then they would have found fault with him. Moreover, his interference in Anglo-Scottish affairs was most keenly resented by Henry

Percy, Earl of Northumberland : the harrying of the Scots for the peace of the border-line was a Percy prerogative, and one which, being profitable when fortune favoured Percy arms, was jealously guarded.

In March 1381 there was great excitement in the household of the Duke of Lancaster. All the necessary arrangements had been made for Henry of Bolingbroke to marry Mary de Bohun, the younger of the two daughters and only children of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex. Mary was at least two years younger than Henry ; and was slim and pretty.

Thomas of Woodstock resented the betrothal. He was married to Eleanor de Bohun, Mary's sister ; and he had schemed that his wife should have the whole of the de Bohun inheritance by the simple dodge of forcing her sister to take the veil. Thomas of Woodstock looked upon the marriage of Henry of Bolingbroke and Mary as a piece of sharp practice on the part of his brother, John of Gaunt, carried through solely with the object of limiting his [Thomas's] power ; for the lands of the de Bohuns would have greatly added to his political position in the country.

Henry of Bolingbroke had already assumed the title of Earl of Derby : his title, therefore, made him senior to his uncle, Thomas. That must have been another cause for bitterness between the two families.

The marriage was solemnised on March 8, 1381 ; but it is impossible to say anything about the wedding, since it excited no curiosity among contemporary chroniclers. If, as seems clear, the religious ceremony took place in London, then it is reasonable to suggest that the 'break-fast' was held either at Coldharbour, the de Bohun house in Eastcheap, or at the Savoy. Richard II. and Edmund of Langley sent their minstrels to enliven the proceedings—and John of Gaunt paid each party 10 marks ; and he was also called upon to pay 50 marks to the servants of the Countess of Hereford for their services. Apparently in a

mediæval marriage the father of the bridegroom was expected to shoulder all the expenses of the wedding-day!

Henry's eldest sister, Philippa, gave Mary a handsome present [what form it took is not known], for which her father paid a London goldsmith the princely sum of £10, 18s. John of Gaunt gave his daughter-in-law a ruby worth 8 marks—a gift which hardly seems worthy of the occasion; but probably represents merely one of his presents, the record of the others being lost. He was not generously disposed towards his son, who received

40s. for as many pence put upon the book on the day of the espousal.

In passing, it is worth noticing that the marriage-fee of the 'officiating minister' was 3s. 4d.

Henry and Mary lived together immediately after the wedding, and in the following April a son was born to them; but he was either stillborn or died immediately after birth. In the meantime Mary had returned to her mother's household. There is abundant proof that the Countess of Hereford was a shrewd and wise mother; and probably she had come to the conclusion that uncontrolled marital relations were not good for a girl of Mary's tender years. It is also interesting to find that the Countess expected John of Gaunt to be responsible for his daughter-in-law's maintenance while she lived with her mother; for in January 1382 he executed a bond to pay

Dame Bohun, Countess of Hereford, the sum of 100 marks annually for the charge and cost of his daughter-in-law, Mary, Countess of Derby, until the said Mary shall attain the full age of fourteen years.

From this record it seems clear that at the time of her marriage Mary was eleven or twelve years of age: the use of the word 'annually' makes the former age preferable to the latter.

But before that bond was executed, England had been

rudely shaken by a rising of the poor. This is not a place to indulge in lengthy discussions of the causes and course of the Peasants' Revolt ; but it is a movement which cannot be dismissed in a word, because it had a definite and important bearing upon the fortunes of the house of Lancaster.

The decimation of the population by plague had produced a state of affairs wherein the demand for labour was greater than the supply, with a resultant sharp and sudden rise in wages. The landlords were alarmed at the prospect of having to pay more for the cultivation of their estates : they asseverated that nothing remained for them but ruin, and with this view went the implication that the country would suffer much hurt and loss. Since the landlords controlled the legislature it was an easy matter for them to safeguard their own interests by statutes framed to prevent the rise in wages.

The workers naturally murmured at the repressive measures of the government ; and after the manner of Englishmen with a grievance they were disposed to see in every failure attending governmental policy proof of unfitness to direct national affairs. Popular preachers emphasised the justice of the workers' grievances by stating that all men are equal in the sight of God, and that it was morally wrong for the landlords to dissipate the proceeds of the workers' labour in shameless luxury.

In desperate straits for money the government in 1380 introduced a poll-tax. It was a burden to be borne by all, but as inevitably happens when vested interests control the voice of parliament the rich were more favourably assessed than the poor, and in those districts of the kingdom wherein the joys of economic freedom were beginning to be appreciated and enjoyed [*i.e.* where the burdens of villein tenure were fast disappearing] the workers resentfully felt that the last straw had been put on their backs. Ugly threats were uttered against the landlords, which were not infrequently met with repressive measures ; and it was apparent that an uprising could not long be delayed.



In London the blame for the 'present discontents' were laid at one man's door—John of Gaunt's.

What brand it was which fired the powder magazine of revolt it is difficult to determine; but there is little reason for altogether rejecting the old story that in Kent it was the outcome of a government tax-collector's brutal familiarity with the daughter of Wat Tiler [see Appendix I.]. That kind of treatment was sufficient to drive any man to rebellion. In Essex, where the revolt was already in progress, the cause of the popular discontent seems to have been exasperation at the government's failure to recognise the rights of the workers as against their masters.

By the middle of June 1381 the rebels of Kent were at Blackheath, and the rebels of Essex at Mile End, ready to force an entry into the city of London. The suddenness of the rising paralysed the government: the presence of armed men outside the city's walls struck fear into the hearts of the citizens. In the emergency one man kept his head—William Walworth, the mayor of London: he did his best to organise a defence force to ward off rebel attacks, and by so doing calmed the citizens. But his efforts were frustrated by two aldermen [Walter Sibley and William Tonge] who sympathised with the rebels: the former opened the Bridge Gate, the latter, the Aldgate; and London was quickly at the mercy of a rabble. The rebels had three objectives—the Savoy, the Temple, and the Priory of St John at Clerkenwell. They left the Savoy a heap of smouldering ruins; and sacked the Temple and the Priory of St John. But the men against whom the hatred of the people was most bitterly directed for the moment escaped with their lives. As a matter of fact John of Gaunt was away in Scotland at the time; and Prior Robert Hales, the Treasurer and Collector of the Poll-Tax, was safe with his friend and colleague, Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the Tower.

How Richard faced the mob at Mile End on June 14, and promised to be their leader after William Walworth had cut down Wat Tiler, is a story to be found in every

school history book. The young king's courage had saved city—perhaps his kingdom ; but while he was at Mile End a party of rebels had broken into the Tower and dragged out Hales and Sudbury, whom they murdered in cold blood. As Richard rode back to the Tower he met the joyous crowds parading the streets with the heads of their victims on pikes.

Henry of Bolingbroke came near to death in those terrible days when London was at the mercy of the peasants. The details are not accurately known ; and in any reconstruction of the incident theories must supplant facts. Perhaps he came near to falling into the hands of the rabble which attacked and destroyed his father's mansion of the Savoy : perhaps they nearly secured his person when they broke into the Tower, for it is known that he went there for safety. Whatever the facts, Henry never forgot the man who had saved his life.

Our Lord the King remembering that in the reign of Richard the Second during the insurrection of the counties of Essex and Kent, the said John saved the king's life in the midst of that commonalty, in a wonderful and kind manner, whence the king happily remains alive unto this day.

Such is the reference made to the incident in a pardon granted in 1400 to a certain John Ferrour of Southwark who had taken up arms against Henry IV.

But if tranquillity quickly returned to London the unrest in the country did not die down for some considerable time, and everywhere John of Gaunt was the butt of the people's bitterest hatreds. A mob broke into and plundered his castle at Hertford, the residence of ' Queen Constance,' who rode north to join her husband as soon as she learnt that an attack was to be made ; and in Leicester the Lancastrian property was also threatened. Friends deserted John of Gaunt, believing that his star had fallen from the political firmament ; and already covetous eyes were cast upon his possessions. Resentful at the way in which John of Gaunt had interfered in Anglo-Scottish

affairs, Percy informed him that he could not come for sanctuary to any of the Northumberland castles; and under Percy influence the castellan of Bamborough, a royal stronghold, refused the Duke admittance. Sir Matthew Redmayne, who held Pontefract for John of Gaunt, was so bold as to refuse 'Queen Constance' admission to the castle; and in the end there was nothing left to the Duke but to swallow his pride and ask hospitality of the Scots—a request which was unhesitatingly granted.

The strong arm of the law and the hangman's rope at last put an end to the spirited resistance of the peasants. Pressure was brought to bear upon Richard in order to make him repudiate the promises which he had made at Mile End. The landlords had triumphed.

It was then safe for John of Gaunt to return to his native land. As he journeyed southwards he was everywhere met with outward show of loyalty and confidence: he punished those of his servants, like Redmayne, who had deserted him in the hour of his need. At the same time John of Gaunt must have pondered upon the force of the opposition which had been arrayed against him. What did it mean? Obviously that the people of England still believed that he wished to seize the throne; and in no uncertain voice they had made it clear that 'no King named John' should reign in England. If his ambition to be king was to be realised then he must look for a kingdom elsewhere—and Castile and Leon were to be the reasonable sphere for his activities.

The difficulty which confronted John of Gaunt was that his fellow-countrymen must be made to realise that national and Lancastrian interests were not incompatible forces. He could with justice point to the fact that the Franco-Castilian alliance was inimical to England's maritime interests; and the prospect of opening up new markets was cunningly dangled before the eyes of the merchant interests in the kingdom. But public opinion was singularly unresponsive to these overtures: at the back of the nation's

mind was the feeling that there was a Lancastrian axe to grind, and that was the last thing they intended to do.

John of Gaunt resolved to bide his time and to regain the confidence of the country. He was assiduous in carrying through duties which went with his exalted position in the state: from December 1383 to January 1384 he was at the head of an embassy sent to Calais to negotiate an extension of the truce with the French; and on that occasion he took with him Henry of Bolingbroke so that the youth could gain some insight into the tortuous technique of mediæval diplomacy. In the following March and April father and son were in the north of England, dealing with the Scots; but once again negotiations were preferred to fighting—and once again there were sneers that the Duke was a 'carpet knight.' But John of Gaunt could return home with the satisfaction of having registered one important personal achievement: he had made his peace with Percy by wisely recommending that the duty of protecting the Anglo-Scottish border should devolve upon that nobleman; and the government accepted the arrangement with alacrity.

In the meantime, however, John of Gaunt had aroused a new enmity. A court party, headed by Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, had Richard under its control; and the arrogance of some of the members—particularly of Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, and William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury—had provoked the hatred of men like Richard fitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and Thomas of Woodstock, Earl of Buckingham. It fell to the lot of John of Gaunt to stand between these two parties in order to spare the country faction fights; and in this capacity, while he served his country well, he was bound to incur the dislike of both parties.

de Vere at once perceived that John of Gaunt stood in his way, and he resolved to get rid of him. During the parliament which met in Salisbury in April 1384 a Carmelite friar announced that the Duke was at the head of a con-

spiracy to kill the king and his ministers. He told his tale to de Vere at a time when Richard was in his company. In an outburst of rage Richard ordered the arrest and execution of his uncle: that was precisely what de Vere hoped would happen. But some members of the court party were unwilling to carry matters to such dangerous extremes. They advised Richard not to act rashly, but first of all to have the informer's story carefully examined. The examination was too rigorously conducted in the torture chamber, and the Carmelite died without really incriminating any one. The 'plot' resulted in a memorable parliamentary 'scene.' Thomas of Woodstock rose in his place and angrily declared that he would kill any man—the king not excepted—who dared to accuse his brother of Lancaster of treason.

de Vere was not deterred by this failure. Early in 1385 he hatched a plot to seize John of Gaunt, have him tried by complaisant judges and then executed; and it is hard to believe that Richard himself was wholly ignorant of his favourite's intentions. The plot leaked out; and the country was plunged into a fever of excitement. At the head of an armed retinue, John of Gaunt went to Sheen to demand an explanation from his nephew; and far away in Yorkshire Lancastrian officers were victualling Pontefract castle, ready for armed resistance to the court party. Fortunately the Princess Joan intervened in this unhappy dispute; and she was able to reconcile her son and his uncle.

Richard was persuaded that John of Gaunt was the enemy of his friends, and he made no effort to conceal his dislike of his uncle. During the expedition which the king led in person into Scotland there was a 'scene' between them: Richard so far forgot his royal dignity as to taunt John of Gaunt with his past military failures and to call him a traitor in the presence of members of the baronage. And it is known that on that occasion Henry of Bolingbroke was a witness of the royal bad manners and ingratitude.

These pinpricks got the court party nowhere. John

of Gaunt was no longer the best hated man in the kingdom : in that rôle he had been supplanted by de Vere ; and in the view of many people the Duke was the only person capable of checking the aims and ambitions of the court party, which could not bring anything but misery to the kingdom. de Vere knew this only too well, but what could he do ? He had made two attempts to get John of Gaunt out of the way by accusing him of treason ; but his plans had gone so far awry that they merely won new friends for his enemy. At length the court party hit upon a solution of the problem with which they were confronted : they would support John of Gaunt's claim to be sent overseas at the head of an expedition in order to regain Castile and Leon. The parliament which sat in the autumn of 1385 was easily persuaded to give the project a parliamentary blessing ; and the Church, always suspicious that at heart the Duke was an anti-clerical and therefore anxious to keep him fully occupied in other directions, not only offered up prayers for the success of the undertaking, but allowed indulgences to be sold in order to raise money to pay for stores and ordnance ! The ecclesiastical face was saved by announcing that the expedition was virtually a crusade against schismatics, for the people of Castile and Leon acknowledged the Francophile ' anti-pope.'

On March 25, 1386, Richard held a magnificent levee at which ' King ' John and ' Queen ' Constance bade him and his court farewell ; and as a mark of the royal favour he presented each with a crown of gold—which they were never destined to wear ! Throughout the audience Richard behaved with the utmost graciousness towards his uncle, and the Duke left the royal presence convinced that at last he had secured the unqualified confidence of the government for his plans in Castile and Leon.

Before leaving England, John of Gaunt appointed his son ' the warden of the Regality of the County Palatine of Lancaster '—a position which thrust upon young shoulders the burden of safeguarding Lancastrian interests during his father's absence. His sisters went with their father to

Spain : girls were useful pawns in the mediæval diplomatic game, and vital alliances were often made through marriage-contracts.

Henry of Bolingbroke was at Plymouth on July 7 when the ships weighed anchor, and carried away John of Gaunt to attempt to win a kingdom in a foreign land.

. . . . .

We are young and have only been a short time armed.

These words form part of the evidence which Henry of Bolingbroke gave at Plymouth in the summer of 1386 to the commissioners who were perambulating the country taking the depositions of witnesses in the case of Scrope *v.* Grosvenor, a *cause célèbre* of the fourteenth century ; and he further stated that in his opinion, Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton, had right on his side when he denied that Sir Robert Grosvenor was entitled to bear the arms, *azure a bend or*. It is probable that Henry of Bolingbroke received the accolade of knighthood during the royal expedition to Scotland, at the same time as Richard II. bestowed the duchies of York and Gloucester upon his uncles Edmund and Thomas, and rewarded the loyal services of his friend, Michael de la Pole, with the earldom of Suffolk.

The departure of John of Gaunt was the signal for the two parties in the country to get at each other's throats ; and Henry was quickly drawn into the vortex of party politics. He was too young to receive a summons to attend the parliament which assembled on October 1, but he must have followed with keen interest the line of attack which brought about the dismissal of the Chancellor and Treasurer, the appointment of a 'committee of twelve,' and the impeachment of Suffolk. He must have drawn closer to his political friends—his uncle Gloucester, Arundel, Nottingham, and Warwick—when Richard, in defiance of the will of parliament and supported by the opinion of a sycophantic bench of judges made a daring assertion of

his prerogatives and openly restored to favour the men whom parliament had condemned.

It was only a question of time before the two parties would come to blows. The news that Nicholas Exton, the Mayor of London, acting under the orders of Nicholas Brembre, one of Richard's friends in the city, had persuaded the Londoners to take a solemn oath to support Richard naturally caused considerable uneasiness in the ranks of the opposition baronage; and by the autumn of 1387 an armed clash was imminent. In November the barons stood under arms at Waltham: they at once informed Richard that they meant to 'appeal' as traitors de Vere, de la Pole, Alexander Nevil [Archbishop of York], and Robert Tresilian [Lord Chief Justice]. The king was at first in favour of meeting armed force with armed force; but some of his friends, notably Henry Percy of Northumberland, advised Richard to meet the opposition leaders. On November 17 he gave audience to Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick, and finally agreed to their demands for a parliamentary impeachment of his friends. It was a dodge to gain time: when parliament assembled all except Brembre had made their escape from the capital.

de Vere bolted for Cheshire, where he at once set to work to raise an army to march against the king's enemies. Richard tried to persuade the Londoners to put the city's trained bands at his disposal, but with commendable good sense the civic authorities refused to be drawn into a quarrel in which their sympathies were divided, and they excused their seeming disloyalty by saying that their business was trade, not war! Thus, when de Vere marched across England to join forces with Richard, he found himself alone in the field, and on December his force was dispersed at Radcot Bridge in Oxfordshire by the troops of Henry of Bolingbroke. de Vere fled for his life overseas.

At that time, I, the writer of this chronicle [Adam Usk], was at Oxford, an 'extraordinary' in canon law, and I saw the host of the five lords march through the city on their way to London from the battlefield; whereof the earls of



Warwick and Derby led the van, the duke of Gloucester the main body, and the earls of Arundel and Nottingham the rear.

These five lords have passed into history by the name of the Lords Appellant. On reaching London they went to the Tower in which Richard had arranged to spend Christmas. At first, however, they experienced some difficulty in judging the temper of the Londoners. Was the city for them or for Richard? The civic authorities did not take long to decide on which side of the fence was the safest landing-place, and allied themselves with the Lords Appellant. Even in the face of this opposition, Richard refused to meet his enemies. To William Courtenay, who endeavoured to mediate in the quarrel, he recklessly said :

Let them lie here with their great multitude of people hardlie till they haue spent all they haue, and then I trust they will returne poor inough and needie, and then I doubt not but I shall talke with them, and vse the matter so as iustice maie require.

Men who have armies at their backs are not frightened by the boastings of an unarmed man. The Lords Appellant took a solemn oath not to disperse until they had spoken face to face with the king. Gloucester and Arundel favoured a policy of deposing Richard, the former undoubtedly thinking that the sceptre would then pass into his grasp ; but their three colleagues would not agree to such a drastic line of action. They said that they had taken up arms to rid the king of evil ministers and counsellors, and that was as far as they were prepared to go. There may be some truth in the suggestion that Henry of Bolingbroke opposed his uncle's schemes solely because he knew that he could not prevent him usurping his father's claim to the throne, and not because he was against the principle of deposition.

Be this as it may, Richard eventually was compelled to see the Lords Appellant. They faced him with letters to

de Vere in which he sanctioned the raising the men of Cheshire to make war within the realm and suggested that support might be procured from the French king at the price of diminishing the English power in France. They asserted that by the law and custom of the realm they had a right to rid the king of ministers who were not only ruining the country by their misgovernance but were universally hated by the people.

Richard fought back bravely or obstinately—let the reader have it which way he will. It was then that Henry of Bolingbroke led his royal cousin to the window of the chamber to show him the force which was assembled in the courtyard below; and he reminded him that those soldiers

were assembled . . . for the preservation of him and his realm.

Gloucester thereupon drove the argument home with the remark :

Sir, this is not the tenth part of your willing subjects that haue risen to destroy those false traitors, that haue misled you with their wicked and naughtie counsell.

Richard was beaten to his knees : he could no longer refuse the request of the Lords Appellant to accompany them to Westminster to hear in open parliament the accusations which they meant to bring against his friends. At Richard's request Henry of Bolingbroke and Nottingham remained in the Tower overnight with the king : it was their unpleasant duty later in the evening, when he thought of repudiating his promises, to remind him that they would certainly elect another king if he remained obdurate ; and with the memory of the fate of his great-grandfather in his mind Richard decided to honour his word.

The record of the proceedings of ' the parlement that wrought woonders ' or ' Merciless Parliament ' excite pity for the luckless king. Under the influence of reckless

ministers he had alienated the sympathies of his subjects : lacking restraint he had given way to outbursts of anger and petulance which won him the contempt of his barons. In consequence he had placed himself in the mercy of his uncle Gloucester and the four earls who belonged to his party ; and had not Henry of Bolingbroke, Nottingham, and Warwick made a stand for moderation Richard would have lost his throne twelve years sooner than he did.

Throughout the meeting of the parliament the armed men of the Lords Appellant stood on guard outside the palace at Westminster ; and it is not necessary to be told for what purpose they were arrayed there. As soon as the session opened, the law lords were arrested and sent to the Tower ; and there was no delay in lodging the complaints against the king's friends. A parliament overawed by armed force had no alternative but to carry through the behests of the Lords Appellant ; and the fact that the accused were not present to answer their accusers did not postpone sentence. de Vere, de la Pole, and Alexander Nevil were safe overseas ; but Chief Justice Tresilian had been found hiding in an apothecary's shop, and Nicholas Brembre was already in prison. Both were put to death. But they were not the only victims of the ' liberation ' : Sir John Salisbury, Sir James Berners, Sir John Beauchamp of Holt, Sir Simon Burley, John Blake, and Thomas Usk were sent to their deaths not because they had committed any heinous crimes against the state but because they were attached to the proscribed party.

The killing of Sir Simon Burley led to a fierce quarrel between Henry of Bolingbroke and his uncle Gloucester. Henry wished to save Burley's life because he was the son of that Sir John Burley whom Edward III. had numbered among the first members of the Order of the Garter and the grandson of Dr Walter Burley, the tutor of Edward Black Prince. Sir Simon Burley had been the tutor of Richard II. : doubtless Henry of Bolingbroke had often come into contact with him in the days when he played with his cousin at Sheen or Kennington. But Thomas of Wood-

stock was 'a sore and right seure man,' who could never forget a grievance. Had not Sir Simon Burley received from Richard the offices of Warden of the Cinque Ports, of Constable of Dover, of High Chamberlain? These offices belonged of right to members of the older nobility: Thomas of Woodstock himself coveted them, and that was sufficient excuse for making away with Sir Simon Burley.

The quarrel was composed but never forgotten: it was sufficient to cause Henry of Bolingbroke to lose some of his enthusiasm for the cause which he had espoused.

Once the victory over the king was gained, it was quite clear that the Lords Appellant intended to enjoy its advantages. Thomas fitzAlan, brother of Arundel, went to the archiepiscopal see of York, arrangement having first been made with Urban VI. for the translation of Alexander Nevil to the see of St Andrews in Scotland—a ludicrous situation, because the Scots regarded Urban as schismatic! Thomas of Woodstock saw to it that he received the forfeited estates of de Vere; and a sum of £20,000 was distributed among the five lords as compensation for their services! The king's power was effectively masked by a committee consisting of Robert of Braybrook, Bishop of London, William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, John, Lord Cobham, and Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton.

But before the battle of Radcot Bridge had been fought and won, Henry of Bolingbroke was a father. It is a proof of the unquietness of the times that he had established his household in the summer of 1387 in Monmouth, an important fortress on the Lancastrian estates; and it was in that castle that the Countess Mary was brought to bed of a son who was to dazzle his generation by the brilliance of his military achievements. Historians still wrangle over the exact date of Henry V.'s birth: some favour August 9, others September 16, 1387; and it is

almost impossible to decide to which the honour should go.

It is known, however, that the baby nearly died at birth : indeed there used to be a local tradition which held that Henry of Monmouth was actually born lifeless, the first breath being forced into his lungs as a result of an old wife's remedy—the vigorous smacking of his little bottom. Moreover, so difficult was the Countess Mary's labour that her life was despaired of by the women in attendance in her bedchamber.

Henry of Bolingbroke was not in Monmouth when the 'happy event' took place. He was riding there post-haste, and heard the news from the lips of a simple ferryman at Goodrich, near Ross-on-Wye ; and so overjoyed was he that he threw the lucky man a bag of gold. But on reaching Monmouth his joy must have been immeasurably diminished : his wife was still at death's door ; and their son was a miserably puny infant. It would fall to his lot to make the arrangement that the baby should be fed at the strong and healthy breasts of Margaret, wife of John Montacute, second son of the Earl of Salisbury. The Montacutes lived about six miles distant from Monmouth, at a manor-house in what is to-day the parish of Welsh Bicknor and called Courtfield, in later times to become the home of one of the branches of the great Welsh catholic family of Vaughan.

Sometime after reaching Monmouth, Henry of Bolingbroke sent a messenger overseas to acquaint John of Gaunt that he was a grandfather. The messenger was a local man called 'Rice at Robert' or Rhys ap Robert.

The drama of the Lords Appellant did not please the nation. The principal actors had strutted upon the stage saying that they wished to deliver the country from the hopeless misgovernment of the king's friends ; and they were quickly to prove that in the business of government they were not more expert or successful than those whom they had driven into exile or sent to the scaffold. It is

true that Arundel put up a brave show in defence of his country's honour : not only had he kept the French at bay in the Channel, but he had carried through a not unsuccessful diversion on French soil. But that valiant effort to regain lost military prestige was quickly discounted by the disaster of Otterbourne, where Henry Percy, eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland, and called by his fellow-countrymen Harry Hotspur, fell into the hands of the Scots.

Thomas of Woodstock earned the special hatred of Welshmen. As a result of a famous North *v.* South riot at Oxford he had issued an edict banishing the Welshmen from the university. A Celtic people do not quickly forget injustice : the echoes of that decision rang through the hills of Wales years later when Henry of Bolingbroke had assumed the kingship. The workers, too, had good cause to hate the Lords Appellant : standing for the interests of the landowners they stiffened up the legislation introduced to prevent rises in prices and the free movement of labour from one part of the country to another.

Moreover, there is a strong reason for suggesting that jealousies and suspicions divided the Lords Appellant themselves. Henry of Bolingbroke might be young and inexperienced ; but in his capacity as deputy for his father and as Earl of Derby he represented a dynamic feudal interest in the state, and it would appear that he had not altogether forgotten the obligations which he owed to his sovereign. It was not difficult for him to guess the object which his uncle Gloucester had in mind ; and out of loyalty to his own house and in deference to his absent father's claims he could not acquiesce in any arrangement which would yield all the power to Gloucester. Throughout, Arundel supported Gloucester ; but Nottingham was on the side of Henry of Bolingbroke ; and Warwick, a man of weak character, went from one side to the other in an agony of indecision.

Before the differences in the opinions of the Lords Appellant resulted in an open clash, Richard acted. Calling

the great men of the realm to him, he asked them how old he was ; and when they told him that he was more than twenty he confronted them with the following observation :

Then I am of yeares sufficient to gouverne mine owne house and familie, and also my kingdome : for it seemeth against reason that the state of the meanest person within my kingdome shoulde be better than mine. Euerie heire that is once come to the age of twentie years is permitted if his father be not liuing to order his business himselfe : then that thing which is permitted to euerie other person of meane degree by law, why is the same denied vnto me ?

There was only one reply to the royal question : by the law and custom of the kingdom Richard was free to manage his own affairs. Richard thereupon concluded his remarks thus :

Well, yee know that I have been a long time ruled by tutors, so as it hath not beene lawfull to me to do anie thing, were it of neuer so small importance, without their consents. Now therefore I will that they meddle no further with matters pertaining to my gouernment, and after the maner of an heire come to lawfull age, I will call to my counceill such as pleaseth me, and I will deale in mine owne businesses my selfe.

It is inconceivable that Richard should have taken such a determined step without having first taken careful stock of the position of the Lords Appellant and their popularity with the country. He would hear that they were divided against themselves on policy : on all sides he would be met with the popular dislike of their methods and the failure of their efforts to bring prosperity to the country. Perhaps Henry of Bolingbroke let his cousin know that he could count upon the loyalty of the Lancastrian power in the event of Gloucester and his faction trying to carry through a more desperate *coup d'état*. But there is no evidence in support of this speculation.

Historians have always regarded Richard II. as one

of history's enigmas. From his accession until 1389 he was in turn controlled by worthless favourites and self-seeking barons ; but between 1389 and 1397 he ruled well, and displayed not the slightest wish to take vengeance upon the men who had sent his friends to exile and death.

On the dismissal of the Lords Appellant he appointed William of Wykeham and Thomas of Brantingham [Bishop of Exeter] as Chancellor and Treasurer respectively. Both were known to be men of considerable administrative ability ; they had the confidence of the country, and were not in any way associated with the extremists. A new council was duly sworn ; but evidence is contradictory on the interesting point as to how many of the Lords Appellant were immediately admitted to it. Henry of Bolingbroke and Nottingham certainly remained near the king, and if not actually members of the council were in a position to offer Richard advice. Gloucester and Arundel made their peace with the king, but were not immediately employed in any official capacity.

1389 was an *annus mirabilis*. Richard had suddenly blossomed forth into a ruler resolved to maintain the dignity of kingship ; and before the year was out a one-time ' wicked uncle ' was to return to his native land in the guise of peacemaker. There is evidence that Richard was impatient for the return of John of Gaunt from Spain : it would appear that he appreciated the fact that this uncle could stand between him and the vengeance of Gloucester. In August the news came to England that John of Gaunt was making ready to return home ; but he was delayed, and on October 30 Richard sent a messenger overseas to urge his uncle to return as quickly as possible.

On November 19, John of Gaunt landed at Plymouth. In a great council of barons at Reading the king gave him a royal and gracious welcome, and publicly announced that he was glad to have him at his side in the arduous business of governing the realm. John of Gaunt at once proceeded to sweep away the difficulties which beset the path of the king : there was a formal reconciliation with



the Lords Appellant, and no sound of recriminations were heard on either side.

John of Gaunt could afford to be magnanimous. His expedition into Spain had been eminently successful, and although he had no great military achievements to dangle before the eyes of his fellow-countrymen he could give them the consolation that one day an Englishwoman would be Queen of Castile and Leon. By a clever stroke of diplomacy he had married Katherine, his daughter by the Duchess Constance, to Enrique, the grandson of the bloody Bastard of Trastamara; and in 1390 they ascended the throne of Castile and Leon. He himself had gained much from the undertaking: in return for surrendering his and his duchess's rights, the Castilians agreed to pay him 600,000 gold francs; and, strangely enough, the agreement was duly and promptly honoured. That gesture must have helped to console John of Gaunt for the failure to win royalty for himself.

## CHAPTER THREE

### A SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

EITHER at the end of 1387 or early in 1388 Henry of Bolingbroke broke up his household in Monmouth; and brought the Countess Mary and the baby Henry to London, where they remained until the summer. In the meantime another son was born to them: he was a sturdy little fellow, very different physically from his elder brother, Henry of Monmouth; and very properly the parents named him Thomas after that Thomas of Lancaster who had been executed for thwarting the recklessness of Edward II., and in whose favour a movement had in 1388 been initiated to make him a saint of Holy Church.

Mediæval London was no place in which to bring up a young family, particularly when one of the children was in an indifferent state of health. The vapours from the garbage-filled river and the uncleansed streets produced all sorts of unpleasant epidemics; and it is not surprising, therefore, that soon after Thomas's birth Henry of Bolingbroke should settle his family at Kenilworth, one of the more spacious of the Lancastrian castles.

Henry of Bolingbroke himself was frequently with his wife and children at Kenilworth in 1388 and 1389; and from such an unimaginative source as a family accounts book it is possible to reconstruct a picture of their family life.

Both Henry and Mary were musical: he 'fluted on the ricordo'; she sang to the guitar. They played chess together on a very handsome chess-board with silver chessmen; and Henry kept himself fit by playing 'hand-ball,'

a game similar to fives. There is an item in the account book which shows that he forfeited 26s. 8d. to two members of the retinue of Edmund of Langley, who had beaten him at hand-ball. It was a routine matter to keep skilled in the use of arms: once Henry so sorely handled a retainer that he had to give the man a pension for the remainder of his life. Tragedy also found its way into their home. One day the Countess Mary was taken seriously ill, and a manservant was sent post-haste to Oxford to bring to her a certain Master Geoffrey Malton, obviously a well-known doctor. Twice Henry had the 'pox'—a tantalising record since the word then covered a variety of ailments. In my life of *Henry V.* I was bold enough to assert that these two illnesses were manifestations of a syphilitic taint, contracted by Henry or inherited from his lecherous father; but a closer reading of the literature on the subject makes me sorry that I did not act with greater caution, though I still am compelled to let the entry pass unqualified and unexplained.

In the period in which she lived, Mary was certainly looked upon as a young lady of fashion. She was the proud possessor of a popinjay—a bird which had acquired a vogue in the houses of the rich since the days of the Crusades: she decorated the collars of her dogs with green-and-white checked silk. If she personally supervised the wants of her babies, then the accounts demonstrate that she had a nice taste in baby clothes; but it is quite conceivable that she left the purchase of these to the nurses, both of whom were called Joan.

The bringing into the world of children was not then regarded as an inconvenience of marriage or an indifference of grim economic laws: the best way in which a nobleman's wife could serve her husband was to present him with a long line of lusty children, the boys to ensure possession of the family estates and the girls to contract useful marriages. About the time when John of Gaunt arrived in England from his adventures in Spain, the Countess Mary presented her husband with a third son, who was called John, after

his grandfather, and with whom he remained a particular favourite.

Kenilworth must have been a pleasant refuge for Henry of Bolingbroke in those troubled days when, as one of the Lords Appellant, he was responsible for the government of the kingdom. There was good hunting to be had in the pleasant countryside of the Warwickshire Avon: there could be enjoyed the happiness which young children unconsciously radiate in the home: there was peace and quiet, in which to reflect upon the confusion which prevailed around him in the government and the self-seeking ambition of some of his colleagues.

John of Gaunt had returned in 1389 resolved to bring peace to the land. It is possible that he persuaded his son to withdraw from active participation in politics; for it is a fact that after Richard had dismissed the Lords Appellant, Henry of Bolingbroke took little part in public life. None knew better than John of Gaunt that factiousness was a dangerous game to play; and he would naturally induce his son to benefit from his own experiences. Henry is to be found among the members which attended parliament in London early in 1390: he received his summons as Earl of Derby, and he must have experienced a thrill of pride at the way in which king and people paid tribute to his father. In that parliament Richard conferred upon John of Gaunt the dukedom of Lancaster in tail [February 16]; and a fortnight later he created him Duke of Aquitaine for life. The latter honour had once been enjoyed by Richard's father, Edward Black Prince: in the popular mind it was thought to be reserved for the heir to the throne.

What was Henry of Bolingbroke to do if he could not take up politics? He was young and active; the management of the family estates would certainly afford him employment; but that was hardly the sort of employment which a young nobleman cared to undertake. Why should he not emulate the example of his mother's father, 'the Good Duke Henry,' and try his skill as a soldier in

foreign lands? In 1390, Europe could offer ample opportunities to a soldier of fortune. The Turks were pitting their strength against the Byzantine Empire; the fierce Teutonic Knights were converting to Christianity the people of Lithuania at the point of the sword; the merchants of the Italian seaports were arranging to finance an expedition to rid the Mediterranean of the Barbary pirates, who did such damage to their shipping.

Between March 20 and April 24, 1390, Henry of Bolingbroke was taking part in the jousts of St Ingelbert, near Calais. He was already accounted a notable performer at jousting: in the jousts held at Smithfield in 1385 he fought so well that a chronicler singled him out for special mention.

There bar hym well Sr Herry of Derby, the dukes son of Lancastre.

That reputation was not only maintained but increased at St Ingelbert. None of the knights there assembled out-classed him, and his only rival was his bastard half-brother, John Beaufort. Their exploits won the unstinted praise of their French opponents, and when reported in England gave sufficient cause for the London journeymen and apprentices to make holiday in celebration.

It was during the jousts of St Ingelbert that Henry of Bolingbroke and John Beaufort learnt that a great adventure was on foot. At the instigation of the rich merchants of Genoa an expedition was being organised to attack El Mahadia [now Tunis], the lair of the Barbary corsairs. It was to be commanded by Louis de Clermont, Duke of Bourbon; and already many of the most famous knights in France had proffered him the services of their swords. Henry of Bolingbroke and John Beaufort resolved to join the expedition; and as soon as the jousts at St Ingelbert were ended they returned to England to muster and equip retinues for service against El Mahadia.

On May 6, Henry appointed Richard Kyngeston to be his 'treasurer of war' during voyages 'in the parts of Barbary and of Pruz.' Kyngeston had been Archdeacon of

Hereford since 1379 ; but his archidiaconal duties did not prevent him from serving the house of Lancaster. He was a faithful friend of Henry throughout his life ; and in 1402 his services were rewarded by preferment to the deanery of Windsor. His accounts covering Henry's two voyages into foreign parts have come down to us ; and they supply the greater part of the information contained in this chapter.

It fell to Richard Kyngeston's lot to make ready the force which was to accompany Henry of Bolingbroke overseas. In due course archers were shipped to Calais ; and the King of France gave a formal permission for the English contingent to pass through his realm *en route* for the port of embarkation—Marseilles. But no sooner had Henry reached Calais than he changed his plans : for some obscure reason he decided to join the Teutonic Knights, at that time participating in a dynastic quarrel in Lithuania. Incidentally, John Beaufort adhered to the original plan : with 24 knights and 100 archers he sailed to Barbary, and at the siege of El Mahadia the Englishmen covered themselves with glory.

Henry of Bolingbroke thereupon returned to England ; his men were paid off ; and a new set of preparations were put in hand for a *reysa*<sup>1</sup> to Lithuania. Some of the men who had undertaken to serve against the Barbary corsairs re-engaged for service in Northern Europe ; and eventually a force of about 70 fighting men mustered at Boston in Lincolnshire. In addition to the fighting men there were the usual servants ; and among the party were six minstrels—three pipers, two trumpeters, and one nakerer. Henry left England on July 20, 1390.

It is interesting to notice that some of the knights who took part in this *reysa* were long to be connected with the house of Lancaster. There was the north-countryman, Peter Buckton, who was the Steward of Henry's household.

<sup>1</sup> In High German *reise* = a journey ; but it had assumed in Prussia the meaning of a warlike expedition ; and to *reysa* or *reise* was already accepted as an English verb meaning to go on an expedition to Prussia.

Thomas Erpyngham, who came from Norfolk, not only served Henry as long as he lived, but was a loyal captain in his son's armies in France, and is best remembered because from his lips came the famous order for battle to begin at Agincourt. Not less loyal was Hugh Waterton, into whose charge Henry was to place his son, Humphrey, and his daughters, Blanche and Philippa, when Richard banished him in 1398. And in the retinue were John Norbury, one of the small band which landed at Ravenspur in 1399; Thomas Rempston, who served Henry in various offices until he was drowned in the Thames in 1406; Thomas Swynford, the lawful son of the woman whom John of Gaunt had taken as his mistress; John Loudeham of Nottingham; Richard Goldsburgh, a Lincolnshire knight; William Willoughby, also a native of Lincolnshire; and John Loveyn, who may have belonged to a Surrey family bearing that name.

On August 9 Henry of Bolingbroke landed at Rixhöft: the main body of his force he sent on by sea to Dantzic, which was reached on the following day. The Teutonic Knights were operating in the valley of the Memel; and it took Henry and his men more than ten days of hard marching to come up with the Ordensmarschal, Engelhardt Rabe, at or near Ragnit. The Teutonic Knights were overjoyed at the sight of the Englishmen: the Ordensmarschal himself lavished presents upon Henry—chiefly food-stuffs for his table; the musicians of the 'Master of Livland' gave a special entertainment in his honour; and every consideration was shown to the rank and file in his contingent.

On Sunday, August 26, a fierce battle was fought near Alt Kowno: it was popularly called 'the Battle of the Pagans.' The enemy forces were hopelessly routed, and as a result of this engagement the victors gained control of the road to Vilna, the chief town of Lithuania. Many prisoners were taken, and considerable booty fell into the victors' hands. But in the fighting Henry lost one of his knights—John Loudeham of Nottingham; and before the

advance was continued he sent a party of his men back with the body for burial at Königsberg.

Picturesque though the account may be in Capgrave's *Chronicle* of Henry's part in 'the Battle of the Pagans' it is an exaggeration of hero-worship to give, as Capgrave does, Henry the whole of the credit for the victory.

. . . he overcam the Kyng of Lettow, and mad him for to fle. Thre of his dukes he took, and foure dukes he killed, with many lordis and knytis, and sqieris mo than three hundred.

The next stage in the campaign was the siege of Vilna. It was a stirring adventure. For five weeks the attackers made valiant efforts to force an entry into the town; but the pagan Lithuanians were resolute fighters, and they beat back every attack. 'The many good bowmen' in Henry's force did ycoman service during the siege; and it was an Englishman, a certain 'Gunner sagittarius,' who was the first man to plant a banner on the town's outer defences. But Rabe had to call off the attack before the town was taken: his supplies were almost exhausted, and many of his men were incapacitated through illness.

Henry of Bolingbroke led his men back to Königsberg, following much the same route as that along which they had advanced. He made his headquarters in the town, and stayed there from October 22, 1390, to February 9, 1391. His first duty was to arrange for masses for the repose of the soul of his dead comrade, Sir John Loudeham; and then to open negotiations through his herald for the release of two of his knights who had been taken by the Lithuanians during the fighting around Vilna. One can imagine his concern for their safety, for their captors were renowned throughout Europe for their barbarous treatment of prisoners. Who the two unfortunates were it is difficult to discover: by a process of elimination it is possible to narrow down the names to Goldsburgh and Loveyn; and since the prisoners were not released as late as March 1391 it is probable that they never regained their freedom.



While the English contingent was in winter quarters at Königsberg, Henry learnt that the Countess Mary had been safely delivered of another son, whom she called Humphrey, a name much favoured in the de Bohun family. Good Richard Kyngeston noted in his account that he paid to 'a certain English sailor' the sum of 13s. 4d. as a reward for bringing his master the information. There was plenty to do at Königsberg: the local notables organised hunting parties, and there were the customary jousts and tournaments. Between Christmas and Twelfth Night, Henry held a great feast 'in the English way': he entertained lavishly, and was the recipient of many valuable presents, one of which consisted of three bears.

He had made Königsberg his headquarters, because he thought that fighting would be renewed in the New Year, and he naturally wished to be as near as possible to the theatre of war. But the war petered out; and in the middle of February Henry and his men established themselves at Dantzic. For the first night or two he was the guest of the bishop; but he eventually rented a house for himself in the town from a burgess named Klaus Gottesknecht, and one a little way out of the town for his men.

Easter Day [March 26] was celebrated with the usual solemnity at Dantzic. During Holy Week, Henry made daily visits to the four principal churches of the town, in each of which the customary offerings were made and the resultant dispensations secured. It was Kyngeston's business to keep accounts and not to write a diary of the *reysa*, and consequently his record contains little information about social happenings; but the entries of entertainments given and of presents received indicate that Henry of Bolingbroke had made many new friends during his stay in East Prussia and Lithuania.

The time came to return home. Kyngeston chartered two ships from Prussian shipmasters—Henry Hertyk and Hans Gosselyn; and carpenters were put to work to erect on the main deck cabins for the knights and stalls for the horses. Stores were bought and loaded; and on

March 31 Henry and his men embarked. There is little information about the voyage itself ; but Henry, it would appear from the accounts, spent much of his time in dicing—a game at which he was not an adept, if monetary losses are to be taken as a measure of skill. Hull was eventually reached, and the party disembarked ; but the servants were sent on by sea to Boston with the baggage.

Henry joined Mary and his children at Bolingbroke, whither they had gone in anticipation of his return. The two eldest boys, Henry and Thomas, were now old enough to amuse, and be amused by, their father ; and they would have infinite pleasure in watching the unpacking of the 'souvenirs' which he had brought back with him. Whether the three bears travelled to England safely or died during the voyage is not known ; but if their keepers were fortunate and skilful enough in keeping them alive until Bolingbroke was reached, then the children's joy must have been unbounded.

John of Gaunt did not intend to allow his son to languish in the political background ; but at the same time it was imperative that he should find the right sort of political employment, or he might turn to his old friends, some of whom were known to find Richard's rule so distasteful that on the slightest provocation they would repeat the experiment of the Lords Appellant.

In 1391 the air was filled with talk of a permanent peace with France. Since 'the Great Peace' of Brétigni truce had followed truce with monotonous regularity, to be broken by either side when it thought that circumstances favoured its arms ; and in the desultory fighting which took place, the honours went to the Frenchmen, as a result of which they were able to regain large tracts of territory which they had surrendered to Edward III. at Brétigni. These losses had a profound effect on Englishmen : they were regarded as proof of incompetence on the part of the government, and in consequence loyalties were strained to breaking-point. John of Gaunt saw that the

unrest at home would never disappear as long as the differences between the two countries remained unsettled; and it is to his credit as a statesman that he made a genuine attempt to solve a problem which had baffled one government after another.

In the parliament which assembled on November 3, 1391 [a parliament in which Henry of Bolingbroke was chosen as one of the Triers of Petitions], the peace with France was hotly discussed. In a petition to the king the parliament-men displayed the utmost confidence in John of Gaunt, saying that he was the 'most sufficient person of the realm' to direct the negotiations with the French court; and the Duke very graciously consented to head an embassy to France, if that was the king's wish. Richard himself had long favoured peace, and he at once gave his uncle the necessary commission to proceed to France to open negotiations.

The embassy did not leave England until the following March. John of Gaunt was largely responsible for its constitution: it consisted of his son, Henry of Bolingbroke; his brother, Edmund of Langley; his son-in-law, John Holland, and Sir Thomas Percy; and they were accompanied by a magnificent retinue of a thousand well-mounted men. In France the embassy was received with pomp and ceremony: royal dukes acted as their escorts, and money was spent lavishly on the entertainment of the Englishmen. The French king met John of Gaunt at Amiens, and after the customary courtesies were performed—the banquets and tournaments—the experts sat down to hammer out a basis of settlements acceptable by both sides.

There could be no peace, however, as long as Englishmen stood out for the conquests recognised by the French at Brétigni; for many of these had been amply liquidated by subsequent French victories, and it was only to be expected that the French plenipotentiaries should demand a recognition of a *fait accompli*. Thus both sides argued and haggled, breaking up the conference whenever there

was a prospect of pleasurable entertainment to be had. In the end the prospect of a permanent peace was as far away as when the conference began : the most that John of Gaunt could bring home was an extension of the truce for another year.

How Henry of Bolingbroke occupied his time during the month that the embassy was in France it is impossible to say ; but he no doubt had his share of the fun and excitement of the jousts and tournaments ; and he would delight in the companionship of men who had fought in Barbary and against the Turks in the lands of the Byzantine Empire. Perhaps it was his experience at Amiens which quickened in him a desire to see more of the world in which he lived.

Not long after the embassy returned to England, Henry obtained his father's permission to undertake another *reysa* to Prussia. On July 1, 1392, John of Gaunt executed a deed under which his son was to receive an annual allowance of 2000 marks, payable quarterly ; but within three weeks he had advanced the whole of the first year's allowance and augmented it by a personal gift of 1000 marks so that Henry should have sufficient money to defray the cost of the venture.

Richard Kyngeston was once again appointed ' treasurer of war,' and he arrived at Lynn to take up his duties on July 15. Henry apparently was there at the same time ; but while the archdeacon busied himself with the administrative details of the expedition, Henry spent his time in the company of one of the most remarkable men of the age—Henry Despencer, Bishop of Norwich. Not many years previously this man had scandalised devout Christians by leading in person a ' crusade ' against the people of western Flanders, whose only crime was their support of Clement VII., regarded by the English as a schismatic and anti-pope. In his own diocese of Norwich he was renowned for the brutal way by which he handled the Lollards ; and he had gained the none-too-reputable

title of *pauil ecclesie*. But if Henry Despencer was a bad bishop it must be admitted that he was a good soldier ; and a young adventurer like Henry of Bolingbroke undoubtedly found him an interesting person to talk to.

The knights whom Henry chose to accompany him on this second expedition were Peter Buckton, Otto Granson, Ralph Rochford, Hugh Waterton, and William Willoughby. It will be remembered that three of them—Buckton, Waterton, and Willoughby—had been with him on the previous *reysa* : Granson was the Sieur of Granson, a town near the lake of Neuchâtel, and he was at that time a fugitive in England because it was thought that he had had a hand in the poisoning of Amé VII., Count of Savoy. It is difficult to place Ralph Rochford, but there is some reason for suggesting that he was a Lincolnshire man. The chaplain was Hugh Herle : he had been on the previous voyage ; and there were the usual complement of minstrels—three pipers and three trumpeters. In all, the expeditionary force was slightly larger than that which Henry had taken with him in 1390.

Towards the end of July 1391 a start was made. The three ships chartered for the voyage were towed from Lynn to Heacham by ten barges ; and Dantzic was reached, after an uneventful voyage, on August 10. Henry remained in that town for about a fortnight, and it is probable that he again rented Klaus Gottesknecht's house as a headquarters. Unfortunately Henry's men were involved in a quarrel with some of the townsmen : the details are lacking, but it is known that as a result of it a certain 'Hans and his servant' were killed. Henry did his utmost to make restitution : he paid the expenses connected with the funeral, and sent his chaplain, Hugh Herle, personally to visit the Rector of the Marienkirche with a sum of money for distribution as alms among the poor.

Then marching by way of Dirschau, Elbing, and Braunsberg, Henry and his men reached Königsberg on September 2 ; but for some reason which is hard to discover he remained there only a day or two, and then

returned somewhat hastily to Dantzig. Capgrave had a reason to offer :

. . . as the lords of the province were not friendly to his desire he left them.

There is local evidence, moreover, that the Teutonic knights at that time spurned outside aid. John de Posilge, who was generally well informed about the period in which the voyage of Henry to Prussia and Lithuania occurred, suggested that Henry was afraid that the relations of Hans, the man murdered or slain in Dantzig, would take vengeance upon his men ; and in the *Annals of Thorn* a dispute between the Teutonic knights and the English over the right to bear the banner of St George is mentioned.

Whatever the reason may have been, Henry of Bolingbroke suddenly changed his plans. He returned to Dantzig and immediately made preparations for a journey overland to Venice, from which port he proposed to take ship to Palestine. It was impracticable for the whole of his retinue to accompany him, so arrangements were made for some of them to return to England. He himself set out about the middle of September with a company of roughly fifty men. He had the services of a reliable guide, one Jakob, and obtained a safe-conduct to pass through a part of Pomerania. At Schonec, Henry was joined by Sir Thomas Erpyngham, who apparently was travelling overland from England with the object of taking part in the *reysa* ; and on October 4 the party entered Frankfurt-am-Oder. On October 13 they were at Prague where a halt was called to enable Henry to pay his respects to Wenceslas, King of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor. This was in the nature of a family visit : Wenceslas's sister, Anne, was the wife of Richard II., and therefore by marriage Henry's cousin. The Englishmen remained in Prague for eleven days. Wenceslas entertained Henry in grand style, inviting him for a few days to his country palace of Bittlern ; and the accounts of Richard Kyngeston reveal that presents were bought for the imperial host.

After leaving Prague, Henry travelled by way of Brun to Vienna, which was reached on November 4. There he met Albert of Habsburg, Duke of Austria, who not only acted as his host but gave him letters of introduction to the Senate of Venice, in which the Venetians were asked to provide his friend with a galley for the voyage to the Holy Land. It was Sir Peter Buckton whom Henry sent on ahead with these letters: he was anxious that the galley should be ready as soon as possible. Vienna afforded him the opportunity of making another family visit: over the Danube lived Sigismund, King of Hungary, the younger brother of Wenceslas of Bohemia.

In the Middle Ages the fitting out of a ship for sea was a long and complicated business. Cabins had to be built on the main deck; guns mounted to provide protection against corsairs; and stores loaded. Henry, knowing that some time must elapse before the galley was ready to make the voyage to Palestine, completed the last stage of his overland journey in a very leisurely manner. His road lay through Austria, Styria, and Carinthia, which provinces he 'did' in the leisurely tourist style; and it was not until November 24 that he came into Venetian territory. He made Portogruaro his headquarters: it was very necessary that his servants should have somewhere to stay while he was away in Palestine.

The Venetians looked upon Henry of Bolingbroke as a person of considerable importance who was entitled to state reception. On November 30, therefore, they voted a sum of 300 ducats for that purpose. Henry arrived in the city on the following day and rented an establishment in the San Giorgio district. He made a formal call on the Doge [Antonio Vernieri], and either accompanied by him or on his own made a visit to the famous Venetian church, San Marco.

While Henry was being entertained by, and was himself entertaining, the leading citizens of Venice, his household officers were busily engaged in making ready for the voyage to Palestine. The accounts of Richard Kyngeston

indicate the nature of the stores which were put on board—bread, biscuits, butter, cheese, more than 2000 eggs, poultry, oxen for salting, dates, almonds, fruits of various kinds, wine, lamps for the cabins, and even a feather bed and bolster. All these goods were purchased in Venice and the neighbourhood; and some of the money required to pay for them was raised by loans from the North Italian banking houses.

The galley was berthed alongside the quay near the church of San Nicolo—the customary berthing-place for all ships proceeding from Venice to the Near East; and on December 22 or 23 the anchors were weighed and the voyage was begun. It is difficult accurately to ascertain how many of Henry's companions went with him to Palestine; but the knights, Buckton, Erpyngham, Gran-son, and Willoughby; the treasurer Kyngeston; and the chaplain Hugh Herle, were certainly passengers on the galley; and in all probability the total strength of the party would be between forty and fifty men. One of the company was John Redyngton, the Prior of the Order of Knights Hospitaller of St John of Jerusalem: he had joined Henry before he had come to Venice, and had played a prominent part in the work of preparation for the pilgrimage.

Christmas Day, 1391, was spent at Zara in Dalmatia: then they sailed by Lissa, Corfu, and Modon to Rhodes, where a short stay was made. John Redyngton would very naturally make use of the respite to pay his respects to the head of his Order, the Grand Master Heredia; and on such a visit Henry would accompany him. In Rhodes fresh water was shipped, and repairs made to the ship's rudder.

Jaffa was not reached until the end of January 1393. There Richard Kyngeston bought a supply of fish and hired an ass to carry the provisions of the pilgrims along the road to Jerusalem. Unfortunately Kyngeston's accounts supply little information about Henry's movements in the Holy Places; but it is clear that he performed the



usual obligations of pilgrims ; and there is authority for saying that he even paid a visit to the Mount of Olives to see the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Pilgrims in the fourteenth century did not remain long in Palestine : Henry of Bolingbroke was not there more than a fortnight. Early in February he was at Famagusta in the island of Cyprus. He visited the king of the island, James I. of Lusignan, from whom he appears to have received a leopard as a personal gift ; and the beast was given every attention during the remainder of the voyage, being guarded by a special [?Cypriote] keeper. Rhodes was the next port of call : there another valuable souvenir was added to the collection—a ‘ sarasin ’ or Turk, who had been christened Henry. Once again the Grand Master of the Order of Knights Hospitaller was visited, and it is recorded that in his castle, as a memento of the visit of Henry of Bolingbroke to the island, the Derby Herald painted six scutcheons of arms. The galley next touched at Cos, whence it passed to Modon, where a quantity of Romoney—a famous vintage—was brought on board ; and finally the route brought the Englishmen to Venice by Corfu, Ragusa, Zara, and Pola.

About ten days after reaching Venice [March 31] the Signory voted 100 ducats for Henry’s entertainment : the citizens of that proud city, which was said to ‘ hold the Golden East in fee,’ were resolved that he should return ‘ to his own country well pleased with us.’ No doubt Henry attended the Easter Day services in the great Venetian church of San Marco—perhaps in the company of the Doge himself [April 6]. But the time had come to bid farewell to the city which had so hospitably entertained him : on April 12, Henry and his fellow-countrymen were at Mestre on their way to Treviso. There, for some reason or other, they remained for a fortnight : items of expenditure for chests and packing-cases in Kyngeston’s accounts indicate that the souvenirs collected, and purchases made in foreign lands, were being packed for the long overland journey. Two of the items are

interesting—a cage for the parrot and a mat for the leopard.

Passing through Padua, Vicenza, Lodi, and Pavia, Henry came to Milan about May 14, where he was at once welcomed by the count of the place, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, who would take a special interest in the visitor because his [Visconti's] sister had married Lionel of Clarence, Henry's uncle. Clarence had died during a visit to Milan: it was incumbent upon Henry of Bolingbroke, therefore, to pay his respects at his uncle's tomb. Count Gian Galeazzo Visconti also took him to see the tombs of Boethius and St Augustine in the city. Henry was able to give practical appreciation of the count's friendship by successfully mediating in a dispute between him and some local friars; and the Milanese merchants would naturally welcome one whose officers bought on their master's behalf silks, goldsmith's work, and cloths of velvet and gold.

Leaving Milan about May 17, Henry made Yenne on the Rhone his next objective, going there by way of Vercelli, Turin, Rivoli, Susa, Lanslebourg, Aiguebelle, and Chambéry. This route took him over the Mont Cenis passes into Savoy, a difficult road to traverse even at that time of the year; and in all probability his baggage went by another route to Troyes, which Henry had fixed as the rendezvous for his party. He then passed by easy daily stages through Burgundy and Champagne, and came to Troyes on June 15: there arrangements were made for Hugh Herle, the 'sarasin,' and certain of the household officers to take the baggage to Melun, where it was loaded on barges to be taken by water to Calais.

It has been suggested that Henry fell in with his father when he reached Paris on June 22; but even if this were the case they cannot have much time in each other's company, for Henry stayed in the French capital only for two nights before setting out for home. He followed the road through Amiens to Calais, which was reached on June 28; and two days later he was on English soil.

The leopard was still the centre of the party's interests:

on reaching Dover a small boat had specially to be procured to land it from the cross-Channel ship. The beast remained in Henry's entourage until he entered London; and one can readily believe that it was the object of considerable popular curiosity with the crowds of Londoners who thronged the streets to welcome Henry back to the capital on July 5.

The young adventurer hastened to join his family: in which of the Lancastrian castles they were then resident is not known; but in all probability they were in London awaiting Henry's arrival. Richard Kyngeston closed his accounts, rendered them to his young master, and then [it is to be hoped] went westward to attend to the business of the archdeaconry of Hereford.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RICHARD'S REVENGE

It was a sorely troubled land to which Henry of Bolingbroke had returned. In the summer of 1393 the counties of Yorkshire and Cheshire were seething with unrest ; and the cause of the mischief is difficult now to discover, so confused and contradictory were the issues involved. The men of Cheshire appear to have thought that Richard was to be deprived of his rights in the county palatine of Chester and of his overlordship over the kings of France ; and in Yorkshire the anarchy developed out of a long-standing feud between a certain William Beckwith and Sir Robert Rokeby. In both districts, however, John of Gaunt was the butt of the popular wrath ; and the disaffected openly said that they would slay him and his son as soon as they could lay their hands on them.

Why should John of Gaunt and Henry of Bolingbroke be involved in this unrest ? This is a particularly difficult question to answer. There is no evidence that they wished to tamper with Richard's rights in the palatine county of Chester : neither had they given any sign that they were hostile to his government. On the contrary, John of Gaunt was the most trusted of his nephew's counsellors ; and Henry of Bolingbroke's absence abroad made it impossible for him to participate in domestic affairs in the year preceding the Cheshire and Yorkshire outbreaks.

The only conclusion that can be arrived at is this : the unrest was fostered by a party which wished to undermine the Lancastrian power and influence in the realm ; and, as subsequent events proved, Arundel for one was

definitely hostile to John of Gaunt and Henry of Bolingbroke. This does not mean to say that Arundel was responsible for creating an anti-Lancastrian feeling in the disaffected districts, though it was rumoured at the time that he was the organiser of the disorders in Cheshire: it is more probable that he was the tool of Gloucester, who was not only envious of his elder brother's position at court but openly disapproved of his policy of peace with France. In effect it was the clash of the peace and war parties, an inevitable legacy of Edward III.'s war to claim the throne of France.

John of Gaunt and Henry of Bolingbroke were entrusted with the task of restoring order in Yorkshire and Cheshire. They did their work with commendable thoroughness, refraining from introducing repressive measures and diverting the more lawless tempers into profitable channels—service in the duchy of Aquitaine. Both father and son openly charged Arundel with lending them little support in dealing with the unrest in Cheshire: they felt that help was to be expected from a man whose great marcher lordship of Chirkland abutted on the county of Chester.

In the parliament which assembled in London in January 1394 the quarrel came to a head. From his place among the lords, Arundel delivered an uncompromising attack on John of Gaunt. Three points in his indictment are worthy of attention since they reveal the true state of the relationship between the two men: first, it was not becoming that the king should be seen walking arm in arm with his uncle and wearing round his neck Lancastrian emblems; second, both in parliament and council, John of Gaunt was given to browbeating his opponents with 'rough and bitter words'; and third, it was a disgrace that the nation's money was being squandered in order to defend the Lancastrian interest in the kingdom of Castile.

But Arundel, ever an impetuous man, had struck too soon. The charges which he made were never seriously considered by the parliament-men. Richard himself de-

fended his uncle : he boldly said that he wore Lancastrian emblems as a sign of his confidence in John of Gaunt, and he was unaware of any occasion on which his uncle had tried to browbeat either parliament or the council. Parliament lost no time in endorsing the royal defence, and amid scenes of enthusiasm a vote of confidence in John of Gaunt was passed. Arundel was left with no alternative but to make a humble apology when ordered to do so by Richard.

Sire, sith that hit seemeth to the Kyng and to the other lordes, and eke that yhe ben so mychel greved and displeisid by my wordes, hit forthynketh me, and byseche yowe of your gode lordschip to remyt me your mautalent.

*With those words the incident was closed ; but the enmities were not forgotten.*

It was a matter for morbid wonderment among the people of England that the three greatest men in the realm should be widowed in the same year—Richard II., John of Gaunt, and Henry of Bolingbroke.

The first to suffer was John of Gaunt : on March 24 or 25 Constance of Castile passed to her rest. There had never been any real love between them : from the outset it was a marriage of convenience. Constance had borne two children—a daughter, Katherine, who, as has been seen, was married to Enrique III. of Castile ; and a son, called John of Gaunt, who died shortly after birth. Constance was not a public figure : wherever her husband went he was accompanied by Katherine Swynford, who was everywhere accepted as his mistress. Constance was content to live quietly at Hatfield, surrounded by men and women from her native land ; and she won the love of her husband's people by the goodness of her life and solicitude for the needs of the poor and sick. In this respect she was very different from her sister, Isabella, who had married Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, and gained for herself a none too savoury reputation in court circles.

Convention demanded that the Duchess of Lancaster should be buried with pomp and ceremony. John of Gaunt, therefore, saw to it that convention should be satisfied: Constance was laid to rest in St Mary's in Leicester, a foundation which had a peculiar interest for the members of the house of Lancaster.

With the death of Richard's queen, Anne of Bohemia, the turning-point in his career was reached. Anne had exerted a wise and restraining influence over her husband, checking him from outraging public opinion and humouring him during those fits of petulance to which he was subject. It is true that her tastes were looked upon by Englishmen as shamelessly extravagant, and her retinue brought to the English court a licence which can only be described as 'Bohemian.' But Richard loved Anne dearly and was her slave in everything. Thus, when she died, he was mad with grief: so distraught that not only did he vow never to live again in the palace at Sheen but even defaced the place as though taking vengeance upon the bricks and mortar for the sorrow which had come so suddenly upon him. When Arundel appeared late at the funeral [as some thought by design], Richard struck him viciously across the face as a punishment for insulting the memory of his queen; and when three years later he saw Arundel sent to his death the incident in the abbey church of Westminster must have inevitably clouded his judgment. Grief brought about a deterioration of Richard's character: a contemporary noted that he gave himself up to reckless living,

remaining sometimes till midnight, sometimes till morning, in drinking and other excesses that are not to be named.

Anne died on Whitsunday [June 7]; and over her grave, in Westminster, Richard raised a memorial in which was displayed the finest craftsmanship of the age.

The Countess Mary died in Leicester when giving birth to a daughter. The child lived and was named Philippa: she was their second daughter, for in the interval between

Henry's return from Lithuania and departure for Palestine Mary had given birth to a child whom they named Blanche. Whether Henry was with Mary when she died or was away on political business is not known; but he must have felt the blow keenly. Mary had done her duty as a wife most nobly: she had given her husband four strong sons and two daughters in whose persons would be secured the fortunes of his family. Once again St Mary's in Leicester witnessed a splendid funeral: in the presence of a great gathering the Countess Mary was laid to rest by the side of her father's people.

What happened to the young family? The four boys remained under the charge of a certain Mary Hervey, whom the Countess Mary had engaged as a governess shortly before her death; and they lived alternately at Kenilworth and Tutbury. The two girls were sent to Bytham Castle in Lincolnshire where they were looked after by a nurse named Joan.

Henry visited his children as often as he could: sometimes they were taken to live with him for a spell. In March 1395 his eldest son, Henry of Monmouth, was taken seriously ill and his life was despaired of; but as the result of the skilled attentions of Thomas Pye, a doctor specially brought from London to Kenilworth, the boy made a rapid recovery. Scraps of information about the way in which the children lived their lives have survived the passing of time: we read how Wilkin Walkin, the minstrel, sang to the boys, and how they participated in that greatest of all children's pleasures in the Middle Ages—the election of the boy bishop. Late in 1395 the nurse Joan at Bytham sent a messenger post-haste to London to buy clothes 'against the coming of' the father of her charges; and on that occasion the babies went back with Henry to London for the Christmas festivities.

Between September 1394 and May 1395 Henry of Bolingbroke is to be found playing an important part in the business of the realm. Richard was away in Ireland, bravely and more or less successfully endeavouring to



bring order out of chaos in a land which had been brutally misgoverned by his predecessors ; and during the king's absence Henry was one of the Council appointed to take charge of the government in England. Another duty was thrust upon him : in September 1394 John of Gaunt went to Aquitaine with the object of doing there what his nephew meant to do in Ireland ; and during his father's absence Henry was responsible for the safeguarding of the Lancastrian interests and the management of the family estates in England. That he benefited by this experience is certain : he no longer associated with the discontented elements in feudal society, but resolutely upheld the royal authority, and rendered loyal and efficient service to the Crown.

Out in Aquitaine John of Gaunt did not receive too friendly a reception from the people of the duchy. Many of the Gascons resented his appointment as their duke, maintaining that that dignity had always been reserved for the heir to the throne of England ; and rumour had gone forth that pressure had been brought to bear upon the king before he would confer the honour upon his uncle. A deputation from the discontented party thereupon came to England to put their views before Richard and his council. Thomas of Woodstock and Henry of Bolingbroke both supported John of Gaunt, and by their advocacy were able to secure unanimity in the council in the Duke's favour. And Richard also endorsed their arguments.

Henry's attitude was the normal one for a son to take ; but in the reading of the history of subsequent events the attitude of his uncle, Thomas, is at first sight difficult to understand. The only explanation is that he wished to keep his eldest brother abroad in Aquitaine so that he might have a free hand as leader of the opposition to Richard's rule at home ; and if the council had pronounced in favour of the Gascons' arguments the recall of John of Gaunt would have inevitably followed.

The chief point of difference between Richard and his uncle, Thomas, was the relationship between England and

France. The former was sincerely in favour of ending a dispute which brought little honour to England and much suffering to France: the latter stood for 'no surrender' and a continuance of the war. It was in the knowledge that John of Gaunt favoured peace with France that the king summoned him to return home in the autumn of 1395: in the impending struggle with his uncle, Thomas, he saw the political advantage of having John of Gaunt at his side.

This explains the indulgence of Richard towards John of Gaunt when he married Katherine Swynford early in 1396. The nobility were amazed at the Duke's bold defiance of conventional standards: as his mistress she had been recognised by all except the straightlaced; but it was a very different thing to ask society to accept her as Duchess of Lancaster. Richard lost no time in defining his own position: John and Katherine were invited to court. It was a sharp reminder to the nobility that their ostracism of the lady was neither desired nor deserved, and the royal favour reached its culmination in February 1397 when by the issue of letters patent Richard legitimatised the children born to John and Katherine before their marriage. Thereafter the bastards of Beaufort ranked among the noblest in the realm.

It is impossible not to admire John of Gaunt's treatment of Katherine Swynford. They had loved each other for more than thirty years; and since the death of the Duchess Blanche she had been his wife in everything but name. Outwardly the relationship had all the appearances of a sordid intrigue, and as such it was regarded by contemporaries in the nobility, though it was considered natural that a great man like John of Gaunt should keep a mistress; but inwardly a great bond held them, and in the end Holy Church made their love *respectable* though not more real.

Richard was resolved to marry again. And why should not a marriage be arranged in the cause of peace?

The King of France had a daughter, Isabella : although she was much younger than Richard that was not an insuperable barrier. Her father, Charles VI., already the victim of a distressing periodic insanity brought on by riotous living, favoured the project. The basis of the marriage alliance was a twenty-eight years' truce, during which time it was anticipated that a permanent peace settlement would be reached. Both John of Gaunt and Henry of Bolingbroke took leading parts in the ceremonial meeting of Richard and Charles outside Calais, and at the wedding which was solemnised in the Church of St Nicholas in Calais on November 4, 1396. In point of fact, Richard put forward a suggestion that Henry should marry a lady of the lineage of the French king ; but the matter was not proceeded with.

The triumph of his peace policy was destined to be the beginning of Richard's troubles. The reckless waste of public money on tournaments and household expenses, the maintenance of his personal bodyguard of Cheshire archers, his patronage of art and letters, imposed upon the exchequer a burden which it could not bear ; and as a result the people were faced with increased taxation. For long enough, governments had wheedled money out of them with the tale that it was urgently needed to maintain the national honour in France : now that the war was virtually ended, that tale sounded hollow and unconvincing, and as a result the increased taxation led to unbridled criticism of the government.

Was it to avoid being involved in this clash of parties that Henry again turned his thoughts to a voyage of adventure ? Early in 1396 his father had refused to allow him to join the expedition of William of Bavaria, Count of Oostervant, against the Frieslanders ; and he undoubtedly toyed with the idea of going out to assist Sigismund of Hungary against the Turks.<sup>1</sup> John of Gaunt was an old man, as age was then reckoned, and very probably he wanted

<sup>1</sup> It is an Italian chronicler who states that Henry fought at Nicopolis ; but he probably confused him with John Beaufort.

to have his son and heir at hand in case the opposition tried to overwhelm him by arms.

This opposition was led by Thomas of Woodstock, who had as his chief supporters Arundel and Warwick. They played on the national pride by declaring that as a price of the truce with France considerable territorial concessions had been made by Richard and the peace party; and they made capital out of a remark of John of Gaunt, that

. . . Caleis greued more Englelonde and did more hurt thereto than profit, for the grete expensis aboute the keping thereof.

The real strength of the opposition lay in their championship of the national honour.

It has never been proved that Gloucester and his associates conspired to overthrow Richard; but the king believed that such a plot was on foot, and he struck before his enemies came out into the open. If the means which Richard adopted to crush the opposition were not particularly honourable, it can be submitted in his defence that he was dealing with dangerous men who would have stopped at nothing once they had decided to carry through their plans.

Events moved swiftly in the summer of 1397. Richard invited his uncle, Thomas, Arundel, and Warwick to dine with him at Westminster. Warwick walked into the trap and was immediately arrested. Gloucester feigned illness, and Arundel shut himself up in his castle of Reigate. Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury, tried to save his brother from the royal wrath; and when the king informed him that he had no hostile intentions, Arundel at once surrendered, only to be placed under arrest. Gloucester was not so easily caught: he continued to declare that his health made it impossible for him to obey the royal summons, and at the same time cast about him for ways and means of escaping abroad. On July 8, Richard, accompanied by Rutland, Huntingdon, Kent, and Nottingham, went with an armed force to his uncle's palace at

Pleshy and arrested Gloucester in his bed with the words :

Thou wilt not come to me, and therfor I come to thee,  
and areste thee.

The wretched man was hastened to a ship lying in the Thames, and under the escort of Nottingham was shipped to a Calais prison.

Richard justified his actions in a proclamation to the country: he was not, he said, actuated by a desire to be avenged on the arrested noblemen for the part which they had taken in 1387; but 'certain knowledge' had come to hand to prove that they were planning 'new treasons.' John of Gaunt, Edmund of Langley, and Henry of Bolingbroke were whole-heartedly behind the king; and throughout August they were actively engaged in collecting forces for the protection of Richard.

Parliament met on September 17 in 'a large hous of tymber' in the palace yard at Westminster: it had been specially built for the occasion because the royal masons and carpenters were reconstructing the great hall at Westminster in which the parliament-men usually assembled. Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, preached the opening sermon from a text in the thirty-second chapter of Ezekiel—*One king shall be king to them all*. On the 18th the commons elected as their Speaker, Sir John Bushy: no choice could have been more acceptable to Richard.

Adam Usk was present daily during this parliament, and his record of the proceedings is virtually an eye-witness's account.

The parliamentary business began with a speech from Sir John Bushy, the Speaker.

In that, my lord the king, we are bound by your dread command to make known to your highness who they be who transgressed against your majesty and royalty, we say that Thomas, duke of Gloucester, and Richard, earl of Arundel, did, in the tenth year of your reign, traitorously force you, by means of him who is now archbishop of Canterbury, and

who was then chancellor, thereby doing you grievous wrongs, to grant to them a commission to govern your kingdom and to order its estate, to the prejudice of your majesty and royalty.

Parliament thereupon proceeded to declare the commission of 1387 an illegal body, at the same time nullifying all its acts. The general pardon granted to the Lords Appellant was also withdrawn: so, too, was the special pardon granted to Arundel in 1394; and the fact that it had been procured by his brother, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was held to be sufficient reason for charging the latter with treason. There was some commotion in the chamber when a new series of treasons was introduced in order to strengthen the royal authority; but the opposition was quickly quietened when the four thousand Cheshire archers on duty around the hall drew their bows as though to shoot at the members through the windows.

Early in the session Richard intimated that some fifty persons were to be exempted from the royal pardon; and when asked for their names he replied somewhat ungraciously

. . . forasmuch as many ask me to disclose those fifty persons who are excepted in the general pardon, I simply will not; and whoever asks it is worthy of death. First, because they would flee; secondly, because I have also excepted those who shall be impeached in this parliament; thirdly, because, by naming them, others, their fellows, would fear when there should be no need for fear.

On September 20, Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury, appeared in his place in parliament. He was immediately informed by Thomas Merke, Bishop of Carlisle, that Richard commanded him to return to his lodgings; and although the Archbishop made some show of resistance against this interference with a privilege of parliament, he was compelled eventually to withdraw.

Then came the dramatic attack on the king's enemies. The 'appellants' were most carefully chosen: Edward

Plantagenet, Earl of Rutland ; Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent ; John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon ; Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham ; John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset ; John Montacute, Earl of Salisbury ; Thomas, Lord Despencer ; and Sir William Scrope. They were arrayed in red robes, ' banded with white and powdered with letters of gold ' ; and in solemn words they accused of treason Gloucester, Arundel, Warwick, and Sir Thomas Mortimer. Arundel and Warwick were brought into the assembly to answer the charges preferred against them, the former wearing ' a robe of red with a hood of scarlet.' John of Gaunt, as Seneschal, ordered Lord Nevil to degrade the noblemen, which he did by stripping them of belt and hood. When the charges were read over, Arundel hotly denied that he was a traitor, and drew attention to the fact that he had been the recipient of a royal pardon.

*John of Gaunt* : Traitor ! that pardon is recalled.

*Arundel* : Verily thou liest ! Never was I a traitor.

*John of Gaunt* : Wherefore didst thou then get the pardon ?

*Arundel* : To close the mouths of mine enemies, of whom thou art one. And in truth, as for treasons, thou needest pardon more than I.

*Richard* : Answer to the appeal.

*Arundel* : I see well that those persons accuse me of treason by showing appeals. In sooth they lie, all of them ! Never was I a traitor ! I claim ever the benefit of my pardon, which, within six years last past, you, being of full age and of unfettered will, did of your own motion grant to me.

*Richard* : I granted it, saving it were not to my prejudice.

*John of Gaunt* : So the grant holds not good.

*Arundel* : Surely of that treason I knew no more than thou who wast then beyond seas.

*The Speaker* : That pardon is recalled by the king, the lords, and us, his faithful commons.

*Arundel* : Where be those faithful commons ? Well do I know thee and thy crew there, how ye are gathered together, not to do faithfully, for the faithful commons

are not here. They, I know, are sore grieved for me ;  
and I know that thou hast ever been false.

*Speaker and Members* : See, my lord king, how this traitor  
strives to stir up discord between us and the commons  
of the land who abide at home !

*Arundel* : Ye are all liars ! I am no traitor !

*Bolngebroke* : Didst thou not say to me at Huntingdon,  
where first we were gathered to revolt, that it would  
be better first of all to seize the king ?

*Arundel* : Thou, Earl of Derby, thou liest at thy peril !  
Never had I thought concerning our lord the king  
save what was to his welfare and honour.

*Richard* : Didst thou not say to me, at the time of thy parlia-  
ment, in the bath-house behind the White Hall, that  
Sir Simon Burley, my knight, was, for many reasons,  
worthy of death ? And I answered thee that I knew  
no cause of death in him. And then thou and thy  
fellows did traitorously slay him.

Arundel made no answer, and immediately sentence  
was pronounced.

*John of Gaunt* : Richard, I, Seneschal of England, do by  
sentence and judgement condemn thee to be drawn,  
hanged, beheaded, and quartered, and thy lands,  
entailed and unentailed, to be forfeit.

The very insolence of Arundel's defence commands our  
admiration, for he was in the midst of enemies, and he  
knew that his fate was determined even before the evidence  
against him was produced. Throughout his life he had  
been a resolute man, and had fought bravely in defence of  
his country : when the time came for him to go to his  
death that fine courage and high spirit did not desert him.  
Out of respect for his noble birth, Richard finally agreed  
that his execution should not be accompanied by the  
gruesome formalities reserved for felons—the drawing,  
quartering, and hanging. His boast that the people were  
sore grieved for him was not an idle one : it was patent to  
all, as he walked to his death ' no more shrinking or changing



colour than if he were going to a banquet,' that Arundel had the sympathy of the London mob. The story of his end is best told in Capgrave's words :

Whan he cam to the place there he schuld deye he chaunged no chere, but took the swerd fro him that schuld smyte, and felt if it were scharp, and seyde, ' It is scharp inow ; do thi dede. I forgive the my deth.' With on strok his hed went of. And a Frere Augustin, cleped Fekenham, bare it hom in his lap. His othir bretherin bare hom the body onto the Covent.

Arundel disposed of, the case of Sir Thomas Mortimer was next dealt with. It is difficult to 'place' this man, but he appears to have been connected with the great Mortimer family of March. He was formally condemned of treason ; but since he had wisely made his escape to Scotland the sentence was never carried out.

On September 22, William Rickhill, a puisne judge of the Common Pleas, read to the parliament-men a document which was alleged to be the confession of Gloucester, written in Calais ; but two days later the news came that the duke had died in prison. Much was made of the fact that he had been in ill-health when arrested ; but there is no doubt, as many people believed, that the unfortunate man had been the victim of foul play at the hands of his gaoler, Nottingham. A verdict of treason was registered against him ; and not only were his estates forfeited, but it was also declared to be treasonable to assist the convicted men's children to recover their heritage.

In the interval between the reading of Gloucester's confession and the report of his death, Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury, was dealt with. For his part in the conspiracy he was banished from the realm, and the temporalities of his see were confiscated ; and once again an obliging pope voided the see of Canterbury by translating its canonical occupant to the see of St Andrews.

Finally Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was

brought into the assembly to stand his trial. His behaviour in the face of his accusers was pitiable.

And like a wretched old woman he made confession of all . . . wailing and weeping and whining that he had done all, traitor that he was ; submitting himself in all things to the king's grace, and bewailing that he had ever been ally of the appellants. And the king asked him by whom he had been lured to them ; and he answered by the duke of Gloucester and by the then abbot of St Albans [John Moot] and by a monk recluse of Westminster [John Working : prior] ; and he kept begging the king's grace. And then, all as it were lamenting and seeking the royal favour for him, the king gave him his life to pine away in perpetual prison without the realm, his goods, moveable and immoveable—as in the case of the earl of Arundel—being first seized.

Richard could afford to be generously disposed towards Warwick : his confession made in open parliament was a complete justification of the procedure adopted against the traitors ; and no sooner was it uttered than the king burst out with

By saint Iohn Baptist, Thomas of Warwike, this confession that thou hast made, is vnto me more available than all the duke of Gloucesters and the earl of Arundels lands.

There is little doubt that Richard had acted on suspicions : events, culminating in this confession, had proved that those suspicions were well founded.

The parliament-men had done their work well : before they rode away to their constituencies they were called upon to witness a display of royal gratitude towards those who had stood by him. On September 29, Richard created five dukes : Henry of Bolingbroke became Duke of Hereford ; Edward Plantagenet, Duke of Aumâle ; Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey ; John Holland, Duke of Exeter ; and Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk : at the same time John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, was made Marquis of Dorset ; Thomas, Lord Despencer, Earl of Gloucester ;

Lord Ralph Nevil of Raby, Earl of Westmoreland ; Sir Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester ; and Sir William Scrope, Earl of Wiltshire.

Parliament was not dissolved but merely prorogued ; and at the end of January 1398 the members re-assembled at the king's command in Shrewsbury. So obsessed was Richard with a desire to be revenged upon those who had opposed him in 1387 that at Shrewsbury he proceeded against the aged John, Lord Cobham, who had supported the Lords Appellant. He was a brave-spirited old man [destined to live to be a hundred incidentally] ; and when John of Gaunt reminded him that he ought to be grateful to Richard for commuting the sentence of death passed upon him to life imprisonment he shrewdly remarked :

Nay, verily, for my life wearies me, because I thought to rejoice in eternal life sooner than I shall do.

The parliament-men complacently voted away their prerogatives and privileges : they granted Richard unlimited supplies. In short, they freed him from parliamentary control : henceforth he could do as he pleased.

The relentless way in which Richard took revenge on his enemies struck fear into the heart of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. Journeying one day between London and Brentford he chanced to meet Henry of Bolingbroke : they talked together, and among other things Norfolk told his former colleague that he believed that Richard meant to deal with them in a similar way to that in which he had already dealt with the other Lords Appellant—Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick. Henry pooh-poohed Norfolk's fears : he drew his attention to the pardons which the king had granted them, whereby they were absolved for their part in the events of 1387 ; but Norfolk quickly reminded him that the three condemned men held similar pardons, and that they had not saved them from the royal wrath.

Henry repeated Norfolk's tale to his father, John of Gaunt, who either advised him to repeat it to Richard or

actually communicated the details to his nephew in person. In consequence, both Henry and Norfolk were placed under arrest pending a full inquiry into the allegations.

Such is the popular story told in connection with the famous quarrel of Henry and Norfolk. The meeting between London and Brentford took place some time in December while parliament was in recess ; but it was not until the end of January or the beginning of February that matters came to a head. Adam Usk, who is usually well informed about the events of 1397-8, wrote :

in the same parliament [*i.e.* the Parliament of Shrewsbury] the duke of Hereford . . . appealed the duke of Norfolk of treason.

It is pertinent to ask why should Henry have taken that step ?

The answer to this question may conceivably lie in another of Adam Usk's entries.

During its session [*i.e.* the Parliament of Shrewsbury] the duke of Norfolk . . . laid snares of death against the duke of Lancaster as he came thither ; which thing raised heavy storms of trouble. But the duke, forewarned by others, escaped the snare.

This evidence of the existence of a plot against John of Gaunt would at once explain Henry's hostility towards the Duke of Norfolk were it not for the fact that it is expressly stated that his father and Norfolk were reconciled.

Nor is it easier to believe that Henry was genuinely determined to revenge the death of his uncle, Thomas of Woodstock : there is no record to show that, during the time when the attack was being delivered against him in parliament, Henry raised his voice in his uncle's defence : on the contrary, with other prominent men in the realm, he had approved Richard's actions prior to Gloucester's arrest at Pleshy. Henry may not have accepted the tale that Gloucester had died a natural death in prison at

Calais ; but, again, there is no indication that he connected Norfolk with the murder.

One is therefore driven to the conclusion that Henry considered it politic to curb the power of Norfolk. But why should he want to do that ? Again the motive is hidden from posterity. Had he already conjured up visions of ascending the throne ? If he had [and it would not be an unreasonable thing to do in the face of Richard's obvious sterility] then he may have thought that Norfolk was the kind of man to try to thwart his schemes.

On February 4, 1398, Richard ordered Norfolk to appear before him within fifteen days. The summons was readily obeyed ; and in the parliament at Shrewsbury Henry openly accused him of treason. At the same time he put his case in writing and handed it to Richard : in it Henry challenged Norfolk to ' battell ' on the ground that he was

a traitor, false and disloiall to the king, and enimie vnto the realme.

This written accusation was read over to Norfolk in the presence of Richard and Henry at Oswestry on February 23 ; and when he was asked what he had to say in answer to the charge he repudiated it emphatically.

But Henry was equally emphatic about Norfolk's treason. To Richard he said :

My souereigne lord, euen as the supplication which I tooke you importeth, right so I saie for truth, that Thomas Mowbraie duke of Norfolk is a traitour, false and disloiall to your roiall majestie, your crowne, and to all the states of your realme.

Still vehemently protesting his innocence, Norfolk made reply to Henry's charge :

Right deere lord, with your fauour that I make answer vnto your coosine here, I saie [your reuerence saued] that Henrie of Lancaster duke of Hereford, like a false and dis-

loiall traitor as he is, dooth lie, in that he hath or shall saie of me otherwise than well.

The nature of the evidence produced by Henry in support of his charge against Norfolk is not known: in point of fact the inference from the records of the quarrel is that he had no positive evidence, and the only conclusion to be drawn is that it was merely a version of the old story of thieves falling out. Even Richard appears to have been at a loss to know how to handle the business: after hearing Henry's accusation and Norfolk's denial he commanded the Duke of Surrey to put both men under arrest; but Henry was immediately bailed out by his father, his uncle, Edmund of Langley, and his cousin, Aumâle; whereas Norfolk was incarcerated in Windsor Castle. In the meantime the method of dealing with the two dukes was to be decided by a commission. This body deliberated in Bristol on March 19 and took the line that in the absence of adequate evidence the matter ought to be referred to a court of chivalry. The matter came before such a court meeting at Windsor on April 29, when it was decided that the two men must settle their differences by the laws of chivalry in a tournament to be held at Coventry on September 16.

Even so, Richard was anxious to compose the quarrel and sent Aumâle and Surrey to inform the two men that he

would be readie to pardon all that had beene said or doone amisse betwixt them, touching anie harme or dishonor to him or his realme.

But Henry and Norfolk replied:

assuredlie it was not possible to haue anie peace or agreement made betwixt them.

Richard did not then abandon mediation: he saw both personally, urging them to be friends—'for it is the best waie ye can take.' They were left to think the matter over, promising to inform Richard of their decisions.

Norfolk said that it was impossible to compose the quarrel ; and Henry sent his answer in the following form by one of his knights :

Right deare and souereigne lord, here is Henrie of Lancaster duke of Hereford and earle of Derbie, who saith, and I for him likewise saie, that Thomas Mowbraie duke of Norfolk is a falsse and disloiall traitor to you and your roiall maiestie, and to your whole realme . . . that Thomas Mowbraie duke of Norfolk hath receiued eight thousand nobles to paie the souldiers that keepe your town of Calis, which he hath not doone as he ought ; and furthermore the said duke of Norfolke hath beene the occasion of all the treason that hath been contriued in your realme for the space of these eighteene yeares, and by his false suggestions and malicious counsell, he hath caused to die and be murdered your right deere vncle, the duke of Glocester, sonne to kinge Edward. Moreouer, the duke of Hereford saith, and I for him, that he will proue this with his bodie against the bodie of the said duke of Norfolke within lists.

This reply, introducing the subject of Gloucester's death—about which Richard's conscience was none too easy, annoyed the king. He insisted on knowing from Henry's own lips whether the words spoken by his knight were his own : Henry said that they were, and pressed that the matter should be settled by the laws of chivalry.

When the burden of Henry's accusations were communicated to Norfolk, he replied that they were base falsehoods. He admitted having received the eight thousand nobles, but he had not put them to his own use : on the contrary, he proudly boasted that he had kept Calais better than any of his predecessors. He further admitted that he had once lain in ambush for John of Gaunt, who had pardoned him for his offence—' for which I yeeld him hartie thanks.' Like Henry he had no desire to shirk the issues involved : he was eager to prove his innocence in the lists.

Richard's next step was a curious one : he took the matter to his council in the hope of effecting a reconcilia-

tion. The council debated; and eventually brought the two men before them. When they were asked if they would forget their enmity, both emphatically refused; and it was on this occasion that Henry threw down his gage and Norfolk picked it up. Combat was the only solution; and Richard with an oath—'By Saint John Baptist'—disclaimed any further intention of mediating between them.

One is naturally tempted to ask why it was that Richard was so anxious to settle the quarrel of the two dukes? It is true that Henry was his cousin, and that both he and Norfolk had lent the king loyal support when he brought Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick to justice in the preceding year; but gratitude was not one of Richard's virtues when dealing with members of the baronage; and he cannot have forgotten that both dukes were as resolutely opposed to his rule in 1387 as the three men whom he had killed or banished. Both were powerful enough to repeat the opposition at any future time; and *prima facie* it seemed to be in Richard's interests to allow Henry and Norfolk to destroy themselves in a stupid personal quarrel.

Richard's behaviour suggests that he was anxious to hide something. Had he been aware of Norfolk's plot against John of Gaunt, and approved of it? And was he afraid that Norfolk might say so? Of course, there was the question of Gloucester's murder—for murdered he undoubtedly was; but even assuming that Norfolk was the murderer, it is hardly likely that he would have taken such a drastic step without first being assured that it would meet with the royal approval. Richard may have thought that unless the quarrel was amicably settled the whole sorry tale would come out—to his discredit.

There is little chance that the skein of complications involved in the quarrel of Henry and Norfolk will be completely unravelled. It is the central mystery in a reign of mysteries.

Great preparations were made for the combat at



Coventry. A special pavilion was erected for Richard and the court: another was built and reserved for John of Gaunt and his household. A ditch was dug around the arena; and a strong contingent of Cheshire archers were posted in and around the tilting ground to prevent faction fights and other disorders. Henry had sent to his friend, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, now Duke of Milan, for a suit of armour for the occasion: the Milanese were among the best armourers in Europe at that time. Norfolk's armour came from Germany, another noted centre of the armourer's craft.

The contest was timed to begin 'about the houre of prime'; and all night long great crowds had gathered around the arena to witness what promised to be a magnificent joust, for both men were skilled in the use of lance and sword. The management of the arrangements was in charge of Aumale, as Constable, and Surrey, as Marshal; and they were assisted in their duties by a company of men

apparelled in silke sendell, imbrodered with siluer, both richlie and curiouslye, euerie man hauing a tipped staff to keepe the field in order.

Henry was the first to make an appearance. He came to the entrance of the lists

mounted on a white courser, barbed with greene and blew veluet imbrodered sumptuously with swans and antelops of goldsmiths work, armed at all points.

On demanding admittance the Constable and Marshal asked formally who he was. Henry replied:

I am Henrie of Lancaster duke of Hereford which am come hither to doo mine indeuor against Thomas Mowbraie duke of Norfolk, as a traitor vntrue to God, the king, his realm and me.

Thereupon he swore upon the Holy Gospels that his quarrel was just; and sheathing his sword, dropping his visor,

crossing himself, and taking lance in hand Henry took the place appointed for him at one end of the arena.

Norfolk went through similar formalities. He was mounted upon 'a charger,' which was

barbed with crimson velvet embroidered richly with lions of silver and mulberry trees.

On riding into the arena he shouted :

God aid him that hath the right.

Then he went to his place opposite to his adversary, Henry of Bolingbroke.

Surrey examined their lances, and found them in order. The combatants mounted [they had dismounted on taking their places in the lists] ; and the signal was given for them

to address themselves to the battle and combat.

Lances were thrust into rests, and both men urged their horses forward.

Henry had not gone more than seven paces when a commotion arose in the royal pavilion. Richard had thrown down his warder as a signal that the combat must not proceed ; and his wish was immediately communicated to the combatants by the heralds shouting

Ho ! Ho !

Lances were taken from the two dukes, who were commanded to return to their places. For two 'long hours' they waited in their chairs while Richard and his council discussed their case. Eventually Sir John Bushy came forward to announce the royal decision : within fifteen days the two dukes must leave the country and go into exile, Henry for ten years, Norfolk for life. The two men were then brought into Richard's presence, and each was made solemnly to swear that at no time during their banishment would they meet or communicate with each other

It is not an exaggeration to say that Richard's verdict staggered the company assembled at Coventry. Did it not clearly indicate that he entertained doubts about the loyalty of Norfolk? Why, then, had he punished Hereford? Richard's motives baffle analysis; and while a variety of entertaining theories have been advanced, none has more force than that which suggests that it was Richard's intention to take vengeance on all the Lords Appellant. Norfolk had little popular sympathy: he was known to his contemporaries as a ruthless and unscrupulous man, and his part in the death of Gloucester made him appear uncommonly like a murderer. Henry, on the other hand, was popular with all classes in the realm; and his punishment produced a considerable amount of hostility towards the king.

Nevertheless, it is recorded that both Henry and Norfolk accepted the verdict 'humblie.' That, too, is inexplicable. Henry was powerful enough to withstand the royal will, if he had a mind to do so; and one hardly expects a man of spirit to submit quietly to an injustice.

His time in England was short: he had much to do in order to arrange for the custody of his children and the care of his estates. Richard at once informed him that his eldest son, Henry of Monmouth, must remain in attendance at the court: he was wise enough to realise that unless the boy was constantly under his eye he might become the rallying-point of opposition against the Crown. His brothers, Thomas and John, apparently went to stay with their grandfather; while Humphrey and the two girls were left in the charge of a trusty friend, Hugh Waterton, who was strictly enjoined to see that they attended Mass daily for the repose of their mother's soul.

Old John of Gaunt went with his son to Eltham, when the time came for Henry to take his leave of Richard; and it was probably during that interview, and as a result of John of Gaunt's pleading, that Richard reduced the period of banishment from ten to six years, promising at the same time that the exile should receive from his estates an annual

allowance of £2000. It was in London that Henry bade his father farewell—for the last time : it was a sad occasion for the old duke, for Henry's banishment was a shattering blow at the Lancastrian power. The people of London gave generously of their sympathy to Henry, and as he rode down the Dover road a great company went with him, lamenting his going and saying that he was

the onelie shield, defense, and comfort of the commonwealth.

Richard's vengeance was complete. Some think that his actions reveal a disordered mind ; but it is a well-known fact that even madmen often act with shrewdness ; and on examination Richard's policy is purposeful and cunning. The ease with which he had achieved his end caused him to minimise the risks which inevitably accompany a despotism. Served faithfully by his bodyguard of Cheshire archers—and the loyalty of those wearers of the white hart is remarkable—Richard felt himself secure against personal attack : they were reckless men, who flighted their arrows in preference to argument ; and it was their callous disregard of the rights of the people of England which, in the opinion of Adam Usk, lost their master what popular support he had.

. . . in all places they oppressed his subjects unpunished, and beat and robbed them. These men, whithersoever the king went, night and day, as if at war, kept watch in arms around him ; everywhere committing adulteries, murders, and other evils without end. And to such a pass did the king cherish them that he would not deign to listen to any one who had complaint against them ; nay, rather he would disdain him as an enemy.

A despot, wiser than Richard, would have kept a strong hand on his bodyguard, reserving it solely to put down baronial opposition should it raise its head : in that way he would not have alienated the sympathies of the ordinary people.

And in his fool's paradise Richard believed that it was his duty to take an exaggerated view of his regal position. Thus wrote Capgrave :

After this, the kyng in solenne daies and grete festis, in the which he wored his croune and went in his rial aray, he leet ordeyne and make in his chambir, a trone, wherynne he was wont to sitte fro oftir mete vnto euensong tyme, spekyng to no man, but ouerloking alle menn ; and yf he loked on eny mann, what astat or degre that evir he were of, he moste knele.

As Dr Kenneth Vickers has remarked in his *England in the Later Middle Ages*, 'the time was past when English Kings could do these things.'

Men will suffer a despot's rule provided that he keeps his hands off their hard-earned wealth. Gross extravagance at court impoverished the royal resources ; and not only was taxation increased, but loans were forcibly extorted from wealthy citizens and corporations ; and Richard remained deaf to the advice of Chaucer,

cherish thy folk and hate extorcioun.

Obsessed with the power which he had gathered into his own hands the king refused to take heed of the writing on the wall—the murmuring of the people and the contempt of the nobility.

On leaving England's shores on October 13, 1398, Henry of Bolingbroke sought sanctuary in France, where he had many good friends—men with whom he had broken a lance in the jousts of St Ingelbert or met on his journeyings in East Prussia and Palestine. They welcomed him with open arms and tried as best they could to make his exile agreeable. The ordinary people of France thought highly of, and openly sympathised with, Henry, whom they looked upon as

an agreeable knight, well-bred, courteous and gentle to every one.

In Paris the court admitted him to their circle ; and he was informed that the Hotel Clisson would be at his disposal during the time he remained in the French capital.

The warmth of Henry's reception at the hands of the French court was not to Richard's liking—and especially when it was rumoured in England that a marriage was being arranged between the exile and a daughter of the Duke of Berri. John Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, was therefore sent to Paris with instructions to prevent the marriage : he told the insane Charles VI. impossible stories about Henry's treachery and mode of life ; and so successful was his mission that the idea of the marriage was quickly shelved.

One is not surprised to learn that as a result Henry allowed himself to fall into severe fits of depression ; and his mental anguish must have been greatly increased when a faithful member of the Lancastrian retinue, Sir John Dymmok, arrived in Paris with the news that old John of Gaunt was a sick man. Henry must have pondered upon the uncertainty of the future. What would be the fate of the young members of his family ? They were at the mercy of a king whose senseless government revealed him to be a tyrant of the same order as Edward II.

The only restraining influence acting upon Richard was John of Gaunt ; but the old man had never recovered from the blow of his heir's banishment ; and ill-health prevented him from active participation in public life. On February 4, 1399, the end came as he lay at Leicester [Holinshed, however, says that John of Gaunt died 'at the bishop of Elies place in Holborne'] ; and with his passing a great figure was removed from national life. Forgotten were the memories of his early factiousness, of his bitter quarrel with the city of London, of his assumed desire to possess the sceptre ; and as his body was borne to burial near the High Altar in Paul's Church in London the people wept. To them he had been metamorphosed into 'time-honoured Lancaster.'

Before Henry left England for exile Richard made a

solemn promise that the estates of John of Gaunt would not be forfeited to the Crown in the event of the old duke dying during the period of his son's banishment ; but on March 18 that promise was shamelessly broken, and Henry's heritage was filched from him. The king's act compelled the nobility to bestir themselves : the confiscation of the Lancastrian estates was a deliberate attack on private property, and the precedent might at any time be used to their own discomfort and loss. It is said that so 'sore moued' was Edmund of Langley by his nephew's act that he made a spirited protest ; but his influence with the king counted for nothing. Richard was convinced in his own mind that he could pursue such a course without fear of retaliation : he coveted the Lancastrian lands because they could provide him with money ; and money meant much to a man so hopelessly in debt as Richard.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE EXILE'S RETURN

HENRY OF BOLINGBROKE had suffered much with patience : the confiscation of his heritage was more than he could be expected to endure. Around him in Paris were gathered men who urged him to strike a blow in defence of the liberties of his fellow-countrymen ; and they would naturally lay emphasis on the report that the Londoners, exasperated by the extortions of Richard and his friends,

spoke much and loudly of Derby's return.

Chief among his friends in Paris was Thomas fitzAlan, the banished Archbishop of Canterbury ; and with him was his nephew, the *de jure* Earl of Arundel, who had managed to escape from the household of Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey.

With all his faults Richard had a statesman's appreciation of 'the Irish Question.' On July 20, 1398, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, had died as a result of wounds received in a skirmish with Irish rebels near Kells in the county of Kilkenny. He was a most estimable young man, who not only was popular with all classes of Englishmen but wisely refrained from getting himself involved in the faction quarrels of the times ; and, since he was the son of Philippa, daughter of Lionel of Clarence, by the law of the land he was next in the succession to the throne of England.

Adam Usk, who was a protégé of the Mortimers, related a tale to the effect that during the meeting of the parliament



at Shrewsbury Richard plotted to do away with his cousin, on the ground that he had harboured that Sir Thomas Mortimer, condemned for complicity in the plot of Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick : Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey, whose sister, Eleanor, was incidentally the Countess of March, was also in favour of his brother-in-law's death, and urged the king to proceed with his plan. But March frustrated his enemies by his scrupulous loyalty ; and, according to Adam Usk, Richard sent him as his lieutenant to Ireland, so that Surrey might follow and murder him there.

The anarchy in Ireland, consequent upon the death of March, caused Richard to plan an expedition to that country ; and about the end of May 1399 he set sail thither from Milford Haven, being accompanied by Henry of Monmouth and Humphrey, son of the dead Duke of Gloucester. Some of Richard's detractors have advanced the opinion that he made the journey to Ireland in order to avoid the complications which would inevitably follow his confiscation of John of Gaunt's estate ; and while this view is probably an exaggeration it is none the less certain that the king contemplated some sort of trouble in England.

Such being the case it is difficult to understand why he should have left the direction of the government in the hands of Edmund of Langley, a man of mediocre ability, who had played no great part in politics and was unable to deal with an emergency. It is true, however, that he arranged that Edmund should be assisted by four of the royal cronies—William Scrope, Earl of Wiltshire, Sir William Bagot, Sir John Bushy, and Sir Henry Green : the four best hated men in the realm !

As luck would have it, once Richard was in Ireland he found his line of communications with England broken. It was a particularly boisterous summer : wind and storm made it impossible for a ship to cross the Irish Sea. Nor were the fates more favourable to his arms : the Irish, brought up in the tradition of harassing tactics and the avoidance of open battles, led the English army a sorry

dance through a countryside deliberately desolated ; and when Richard made his entry into Dublin it was at the head of a starving and demoralised army.

Richard's absence in Ireland gave Henry his opportunity. For long enough he had been torn between two opinions : some of his friends favoured an open attack on England in order to rid the country of a tyrant ; but others saw greater wisdom in cautious action. It was the Duke of Berri who advised Henry, when the news reached Paris, that Richard meant to confiscate the Lancastrian estates, to engage in a round of pleasures as though indifferent to the king's act ; and it is quite possible that the ruse persuaded Richard that there was little danger to fear from his exiled cousin.

The policy of caution was adhered to until the very end. In order to put off the scent Richard's agents in Paris, it was announced that Henry and his friends contemplated a visit to Spain ; and as a result their departure from the French capital aroused little suspicion. But no sooner were they clear of Paris than they made straight for Boulogne ; and there they procured a ship from some English merchants.

Had Henry so wished he could have enlisted a not inconsiderable army to accompany him to England : Frenchmen, who had been his friends in adversity, and adventurers, whose fingers itched for the opportunity of making war anywhere, were eager to put their swords at his disposal. But he did not mean to make his return home assume the character of a foreign invasion : he knew the resentment which would be aroused in the breasts of his fellow-countrymen at the sight of foreigners making war in England ; and in a venture which compelled him to defy the will of his sovereign he was not prepared to take the risk of alienating popular support. Henry resolved to return to England as a great English nobleman who had suffered a grievous wrong : in justification of the breach of the oath which he had sworn [that he would

remain in exile for six years] he could point to Richard's broken promise—that on the death of John of Gaunt the Lancastrian lands should not be forfeited. Thus when he left Boulogne he had with him only those intimate friends who had shared his exile—the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Arundel, Sir Thomas Erpyngham, Sir John Norbury, and perhaps Sir Thomas Rempston. All told, the company did not number more than 'fifteen lances.'

Despite the caution which he had used in concealing his real intentions the news of Henry's project was told in England even before the party set sail from Boulogne; and the council of regency made feverish preparations to resist his landing. Wiltshire had a force in the neighbourhood of Dover: Edmund of Langley was also on guard in the southern shires. In consequence, after making various feints at landing in the south, Henry had the ship put on a northerly course; and at last made a landing

at Ravensporne, fast by Grymsby, in the Translacioun of Seynt Martin [July 4th].

The chronicler Capgrave further assures us that there was 'no resistens.'

It was only natural that Henry should immediately make for the district in Yorkshire which formed an important part of the Lancastrian estates in that county—the forest of Pickering; and there he was joined by his old friend, Sir Robert Waterton, at the head of a large body of foresters. At Knaresborough, another Lancastrian stronghold, Henry made the famous promise that henceforth the Church should pay no more tenths and the people no more taxes—a promise which, although incapable of fulfilment, brought thousands flocking to his standard; and when he came to Pontefract he was met by the men who 'kept' the Anglo-Scottish march—Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland; his son, Harry Hotspur; Ralph Nevil, Earl of Westmoreland; and the Lords of Greystock and Willoughby. They asked him his intentions; and it was at the High Altar of the parish church of Doncaster that

Henry swore on the Holy Gospels that he had returned only with the object of regaining his inheritance and that Richard should retain the throne for the remainder of his life. So the lords of the border threw in their lot with his : Henry of Bolingbroke was the champion of the principle of the sanctity of property—a principle which they did not intend to see violated with impunity.

By the time Leicester was reached Henry had with him a mighty army, estimated variously by contemporaries as between 60,000 and 100,000 men ; and while he rested there he learnt that his uncle, Edmund, who had stood under arms at St Albans in order to prevent Henry reaching the capital, was marching westward to effect a juncture with the royal forces expected from Ireland. Henry was resolved that the two forces should not meet ; and marching forth from Leicester he eventually came up with his uncle's army at Berkeley. There was a brush between the scouts of the two armies, but no general engagement : Edmund of Langley had not the heart of a soldier, and he led his men into his nephew's lines.

Those in the regent's army who remained loyal to Richard took refuge in Bristol ; but the people of that city had no love for the king ; and taking the law into their own hands they arrested and put to death Wiltshire, Sir John Bushy, and Sir Henry Green—

the king's most evil counsellors and the chief fosterers of his malice.

When Henry entered Bristol he saw the gory heads of the three men displayed on the city's walls.

Adam Usk joined Henry's army somewhere in the neighbourhood of Bristol ; and once again he provides us with an eye-witness's account. Adam, who in later life was an adept in running with the hare and hunting with the hounds, records with pride that he was able to save his birthplace from Henry's wrath. Usk was the dower of Eleanor, the widow of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March ; but she had already taken a second husband, Edward

Charlton, who in 1401 was to succeed to the lordship of Powys. Why the people of Usk had decided to oppose Henry, and how Henry came to be in that locality, are questions which Adam Usk leaves unanswered.

For according to Adam's record Henry marched northwards from Bristol through the border districts to Chester. He was the guest of the Bishop of Hereford [John Trefnant] for the night of August 2-3; and the following night lodged with the Prior of Leominster. Ludlow Castle, a royal stronghold, was seized on August 4. It was during their stay at Ludlow that Adam Usk rendered good service to a friend of his undergraduate days at Oxford, one Thomas Prestbury, who had been sent to prison for preaching against the viciousness of Richard's court. Adam not only secured his friend's release but persuaded Henry and Archbishop fitzAlan [who is more often called Arundel] to promote Prestbury to the vacant abbacy of Shrewsbury.

On the eve of setting out for Chester Henry issued strict orders to his men that they must not plunder or pillage the countryside through which they were to march. He did not wish to add to his difficulties by infuriating the populace: he knew only too well that the people of the county palatine of Chester were wholeheartedly 'Richard's men.' Adam records that so resented was this order that many left Henry's host and returned to their homes: it was plunder which made a mediæval war a profitable undertaking. Nor did Henry's good intentions win him friends in the county palatine of Chester. Everywhere he was met with that kind of resistance which is infinitely more demoralising than armed attack—the poisoning of wells and water-butts and the cutting down of stragglers; and in the end he was compelled to order his men to harry the land—an order which was doubtless obeyed with alacrity and thoroughness.

On August 8 the army came within sight of Chester; and on the following day Henry decided to enter the town.

First he mustered his men in a large and fair field, wherein was a crop of standing corn, some three miles from the city,

on its eastern side, marshalling their ranks to the number of one hundred thousand fighting men. And it may be said that the hills shone again with their shields.

From Adam's account it will be seen that Henry feared that his entry into Chester would be contested ; but the dodge of showing the citizens the full strength of his force marching against them had the desired effect, and no resistance was offered. That, however, did not save Chester from the rapacity of Henry's men. Wrote Adam Usk :

. . . he and his men, using King Richard's wine which was found there in good store, laying waste fields, pillaging houses, and, in short, taking as their own everything they wanted for use or food, or which in any way could be turned to account.

If Henry was lenient towards his own men, he was stern in dealing with wrongdoers belonging to Richard's party. Not long after he had made Chester his headquarters he ordered the execution of a certain ' Perkin de Lye ' [Sir Piers de Legh of Lyme Hanley], who as Warden of the Forest of Delamere had grievously oppressed the inhabitants of the surrounding countryside. The incident is a typical example of the mediæval outlook : the execution of Sir Piers de Legh enabled Henry to pose as the lover of justice and the enemy of those who oppressed the poor !

Henry's venture was already within sight of success when Richard in Ireland learnt of the exile's return. For a time he was undecided what course of action he should take : some urged him to return without delay to England to put the matter to the test of battle ; but others thought that resistance to Henry might be directed as effectively [and certainly more safely] from Dublin. Richard was no coward : he decided that he would return and face the matter out. In the meantime he ordered John Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, to proceed to Chester and North Wales to raise the people in those districts against the invader.

Towards young Henry of Monmouth, who was in his entourage at Dublin, Richard was surprisingly generous ; for he might have used the boy as a pawn by which to put his father in check. Thomas Otterbourne, the chronicler, records the conversation which took place between Richard and Henry of Monmouth immediately after the news of Henry of Bolingbroke's landing at Ravenspur reached Dublin.

*Richard* : Henry, my child, see what your father hath done to me. He has actually invaded my realm as an enemy, and, as if in regular warfare, has taken captive and put to death my liege subjects without mercy or pity. I am sorry for you : because of this unhappy proceeding of your father you must perhaps suffer loss of your inheritance.

*Henry* : In truth, my gracious king and lord, I am grieved by these tidings ; and, as I hope, you are fully assured of my innocence in this proceeding of my father.

*Richard* : I know, my child, that the crime which your father has perpetrated does not attach at all to you ; and therefore I hold you excused of it absolutely.

Nevertheless when the time came for Richard to set out for England he was careful to see that young Henry of Monmouth and Humphrey of Gloucester were under lock and key in the Irish castle of Trim.

Adam Usk gives the date of Richard's landing at Pembroke as July 22, 1399 ; but that date is probably a week or ten days too early, since it is certain that Richard was not in England at the time when Henry of Bolingbroke's force halted at Hereford [August 2]. On landing Richard sent forward Thomas Despencer, Earl of Gloucester, to raise men in Morgannwg [now Glamorgan] ; but the people's heart was not in the king's cause, and few rallied to him. Nor did the army which had returned from Ireland display greater loyalty : while Despencer was away in Morgannwg men deserted in their hundreds, and Richard was left almost alone. His one hope lay in the loyalty of the men

of Chester and North Wales ; and rumours were current in Pembroke that Salisbury had gathered together 40,000 men at Conway. So Richard made his way across Wales disguised as a friar.

Rumour had grossly overestimated the strength of the loyalist force at Conway : at most, Salisbury had not more than 10,000 men. On reaching Conway, Richard took charge of the situation and sent the Dukes of Exeter and Surrey to Chester to ask Henry what his intentions were. The two dukes never returned, for Henry ordered them to remain in his company, and they probably welcomed a decision which extricated them from a dangerous situation. At Conway the king was on the verge of despair ; and the royal despondency infected the ranks of the army, with the result that there were frequent desertions. Not knowing what to do Richard wandered from one castle to another, from Conway to Caernarvon, from Caernarvon to Beaumaris, hoping that the grim walls of the Edwardian fortresses would protect him from the vengeance of the cousin whom he had so wilfully wronged. At length he returned to Conway to await his fate ; and while he did so he cursed the luck that had come to him, boasting that once he had his hands on Henry he would deal with him in a way

which should be spoken of long enough even in Turkey !

About the same time that Exeter and Surrey went to Chester on Richard's behalf Henry received another embassy. It consisted of three aldermen and fifty citizens of the city of London ; and they came to tell him that he could rely upon the support of the Londoners. Indeed the Londoners had already taken the law into their own hands, and the members of the mission related to Henry how certain of the citizens

had gathered in arms to Westminster Abbey to search for the king, hearing that he had in secret fled thither ; and that, not finding him there, they had ordered to be kept in custody, till parliament, Roger Walden, Nicholas Slake, and Ralph Selby, the king's special counsellors, whom they did find,



The news had a special interest for Archbishop fitzAlan. Roger Walden had taken his place in the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury when Richard had sent him into exile in 1308. Walden had been treasurer, and was deeply attached to the king's party. Nicholas Slake was Dean of the King's Chapel; and Ralph Selby was Warden of King's Hall in the University of Cambridge. The citizens put the three men 'in irons' and lodged them in the Newgate.

About the middle of August, Northumberland went to Conway to see Richard. The earl spoke fair words to the hapless monarch; and with an oath on the Sacred Host assured him that Henry had no intention of seizing the throne, but that he wished merely to escort Richard back to London so that a parliament might be summoned to deal with the 'evil counsellors' who had *caused* the king to misgovern his realm. Whether that oath was taken in good faith or was falsely sworn will never be known: what Northumberland said to Richard was in accordance with the policy which Henry had defined to the northern lords in the parish church of Doncaster; and it may well be that at that moment Henry was genuinely sincere in his intentions. On the other hand, subsequent events put a different complexion on the incident; and Northumberland's promise looks like a dishonourable method of obtaining possession of the king's person. In mitigation of this conduct the only thing that can be said is that Richard would have acted quite as dishonourably had he had the opportunity of doing so. Had he not already vowed to deal with Henry in a way which would have delighted a Turkish janissary?

Richard was cornered, and further resistance was futile. He agreed, therefore, to accompany Northumberland to meet his cousin in the castle in Flint. They left Conway early in the morning, and after dining at Rhuddlan they reached Flint in the evening. Next morning, while Richard was hearing Mass in the castle chapel, the sound of marching men fell upon his ears; and when at the conclusion of the

service he went to the ramparts to see what was happening, he saw a force of 20,000 men being skilfully deployed so as to encircle the castle.

The various accounts of the meeting of Richard and Henry agree that to the end the king held fast to the dignity which attaches to royalty. He had his throne set up in the outer ward of the castle; and when he took his seat in it ready for the interview with Henry, he was attended by the Bishop of Carlisle [Thomas Merke], the Earl of Salisbury, and Sir Stephen Scrope. Neither did Henry forget that he was a subject in the presence of his liege lord; as he drew near to the throne he bowed three times, and remained kneeling until Richard took him by the hand and raised him up.

According to Capgrave [his account was written before the end of the fifteenth century] Henry and Archbishop fitzAlan at once informed Richard that he must abdicate; and after that point had been driven home, the archbishop read the king a striking, if impudent, homily on keeping faith.

*Arundel*: Thou art a fair man, but thou art falsest of alle menn. Thou promisist and assurid me, sweryng on Goddis Body, that thou woldest do my brothir non harm; and whanne I hadde brought him to thi presence I myghte nevyr see him aftir. Thou also promisest me to calle me agayn in haste fro myn exile, and that ther sholde nevyr be othir archebisshoppe of Caunterbury but I whylest I livid; and now thou hast maad anothir archebisshoppe, and also procurid my dethe. Thou hast not rewlid thi reme and thi peple, but hast spoillid thaym be fals raisyngis of taxes and talages not to the profit of the reme, but for to fulfille and satisfie thi couetise and pride. Thou hast alwey be rewlid be fals flaterers, folowyng thair counsel and thaym avaunsyng befor alle othir trew men, refusyng the counsel of thi trew lordis; and because thay wolde haue withstonde thi cursed malice as reson wolde, thou hast thaym slayne unrightfulli, and disherited thair heiris for evirmore, aftyr thyn

ordenaunces and statutis ; but thay shalle not longe stonde, be Goddis grace. Thou hast also livid incontinentli and lecherousli, and with thi foulle and cursid ensample thou hast enfectid thi court and thi reme.

*Henry* : No more, ye haue said ynoughe.

Whether that is a true record of the archbishop's words or a reconstruction of the scene undertaken from hearsay is a matter for argument ; but in that speech is emphasised with great clearness one of the main reasons of Richard's unpopularity—he had spurned the advice of his 'trew lordis' and had chosen his councillors outside the ranks of the older nobility.

Holinshed has a totally different account of the famous interview at Flint ; and while he wrote even later than Capgrave, he had access to evidence which is now lost to us.

*Richard* : Deere cousine, ye are welcome.

*Henry* : My souereigne lord and king, the cause of my commyng at this present, is [your honour saued] to haue again restitution of my person, my lands and heritage, through your fauourable licence.

*Richard* : Deere cousine, I am readie to accomplish your will so that you may inioy all that is yours, without exception.

A third account, in some respects more contemporaneous than the other two, though of foreign source, retains the charge of misgovernment even although it is couched in language more restrained than that employed by the archbishop.

*Richard* : My fair cousin of Lancaster, you are right welcome.

*Henry* : My lord king, I am come sooner than you sent for me, the reason whereof I will tell you. The common report of your people is that you have for the space of twenty years and more governed them very badly and very rigorously ; and they are not well contented therewith ; but if it pleaseth you, my Lord King, I will help you govern them better.

*Richard* : Fair cousin, since it pleaseth you it pleaseth me well.

Taken side by side the three accounts may represent the truthful record of the talk which Richard and Henry had on that memorable occasion. Archbishop fitzAlan's outburst was that of an embittered man: he had lost his brother and been deprived of his archiepiscopal see, even though, in the one case, the king had promised to deal leniently with an offender, and, in the other, to reserve a sacred office for its lawful occupant.

Richard was a prisoner in his cousin's hands. It is said that even before the company left Flint he was subjected to indignities and insults; and that he was compelled to make the journey to Chester mounted on a miserable palfrey. Henry remained three days in Chester: *during the time Richard was imprisoned in his own castle*, guarded by the son of the Earl of Arundel whom he had sent to his death in 1398. And yet Henry was forced to ask his prisoner to perform one act of sovereignty while they rested at Chester: this took the form of a proclamation in which Richard enjoined the people of the land to desist from disorders and faction fights.

The journey to London was made by way of Nantwich, Newcastle-under-Lyne, Stafford, Lichfield, Coventry, Daventry, Northampton, Dunstable, and St Albans; and at each of these places the crowds stood and stared at the luckless king. There was a hostile demonstration against Richard when he entered London on September 2: the people crowded in on him, hurling curses at his head and shouting with wild delight—

Now are we well avenged of this wicked bastard who has governed us so ill!

The Londoners who had once boasted that Richard was 'the London king' transferred their loyalty to his rival, at whose coming they rejoiced, as one chronicler puts it, as

if Our Lord had come among them.

Incidentally, Henry never lost the confidence of the city of London.

After shutting Richard up in the Tower, Henry paid a solemn visit to Paul's Church to do honour before the graves of his father and mother ; and that display of filial affection endeared him still more to the Londoners.

In adversity Richard found true greatness of soul. It is a moving picture which Adam Usk has bequeathed to posterity of the anguish of mind through which the poor man passed : he relates how on September 16, when in the Tower in the company of William Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny, he heard Richard utter the soliloquy which Shakespeare clothed with immortality in his tragedy.<sup>1</sup>

My God ! a wonderful land is this, and a fickle ; which hath exiled, slain, destroyed or ruined so many kings, rulers, and great men, and is ever tainted and toileth with strife and variance and envy.

They listened to him go over the names of those who had suffered in that manner ; and the incident touched Adam Usk deeply.

Perceiving then the trouble of his mind, and how that none of his own men, nor such as were wont to serve him, but strangers who were but spies upon him, were appointed to his service, and musing on his ancient and wonted glory and on the fickle fortune of the world, I departed thence much moved at heart.

But it must have been hard to find pity for Richard even in his misfortune : he had pursued his fate relentlessly, never heeding the warnings which were given him, and it had come to him in a degrading and humiliating form.

<sup>1</sup> See *Richard II.*, Act II. scene 2. Shakespeare's paraphrase of the soliloquy runs :

For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings :  
How some have been deposed ; some slain in war ;  
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed ;  
Some poison'd by their wives ; some sleeping kill'd ;  
^ll murder'd

Richard was still England's king : that dignity was his until he resigned the throne of his own volition or was deprived of it by his opponents. The former was the more desirable way—from Henry's point of view ; and on September 28 or 29 [both dates are given] a deputation waited upon the imprisoned king with the object of extorting from him a signed deed of abdication. That deputation was carefully selected : the Lords Spiritual were represented by the Archbishop of York [Richard Scrope] and the Bishop of Hereford [John Trefnant] ; the Lords Temporal, by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland ; the 'lower prelates,' by the Abbot of Westminster and the Prior of Canterbury ; the baronage by Thomas, Lord Berkeley, and Hugh, Lord Burnell ; the lower clergy, by Masters Thomas Stow and John Borbach ; and the commonalty, by Sir Thomas Erpyngham and Sir Thomas Grey. They were accompanied by two of the judges, Sir William Thyrnynge and Sir John Markham, and two notaries public, William de Feriby and Denis Lopham.

At first Richard stolidly refused to sign the deed of abdication : he was king, and it was their duty to obey him, and not he them or those who had sent them. But the time was past when he could plead respect for his sovereignty : he was quickly and plainly told that he was not in a position to make terms and that he must sign the document which they had with them. Protesting that he was being forced to abdicate under duress he signed the deed, which stripped him of all regal authority and virtually sounded his death knell. It was a most humiliating document :

In the Name of God Amen : I Richard by the Grace of God, king of England and France, &c. : lord of Ireland, acquit and assoile all archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, secular or religious, of what dignitie, degree, state, or condition so euer they be ; and also all dukes, marquesses, earles, barons, lords, and all my liege men, both spirituall and secular, of what manner or degree they be, from their oth of fealtie and homage, and all other deeds and priuileges made

vnto me, and from all manner bonds of allegiance, regalitie and lordship, in which they were or be bounden to me, or anie otherwise constreined; and them, their heires, and successors for euermore, from the same bonds and oths I release, deliuer, and acquit, and set them for free, dissolued and acquit, and to be harmelesse, for as much as longeth to my person by anie manner waie or title of right, that to me might follow of the foresaid things, or anie of them. And also I resigne all my kingly dignitie, maiestie and crowne, with all the lordships, power, and priuileges to the foresaid kingly dignitie and crowne belonging, and all other lordships and possessions to me in anie maner of wise pertaining, of what name, title, qualitie, or condition soeuer they be, except the lands and possessions for me and mine obits purchased and bought. And I renounce all right, and all maner of title of possession, which I euer had or haue in the same lordships or possessions, or anie of them, with anie maner of rights belonging or appertaining vnto anie part of them. And also the rule and gouernance of the same kingdome and lordships, with all ministrations of the same, and all things and euerie each of them, that to the whole empire and iurisdictions of the same belongeth of right, or in anie wise may belong.

And also I renounce the name, worship, and regaltie and kingly highnesse; clearelie, frelie, singularie and wholie, in the most best maner and forme that I may, and with deed and word I leaue off and resigne them, and go from them for euermore; sauing alwaies to my successors kings of England, all the rights, priuileges and appurtenances to the said kingdome and lordships abouesaid belonging and appertaining. For well I wote and knowledge, and deeme my selfe to be, and haue bene insufficient and vnable, and also vnprofitable, and for my open deserts not vnworthie to be put downe. And I sweare vpon the holie euangelists here presentlie with my hands touched, that I shall neuer repugne to this resignation, demission or yeelding vp, nor neuer impugne them in anie maner by word or deed, by myselfe nor none other: nor I shall not suffer it to be impugned, in as much as in me is, priuile and apertlie. But I shall haue, hold, and keepe this renouncing, demission, and giuing vp for firme and stable for euermore in all and euerie part thereof, so God me help

and all saints, and by this holie euangelist, by me bodilie touched and kissed. And for more record of the same, here openlie I subscribe and signe this present resignation with mine own hand.

The notaries in attendance sealed the deed in Richard's presence ; and then, when the ring—the symbol of kingly office—had been taken from him, they went their ways, leaving the unhappy man to his own musings—now no longer king but Sir Richard of Bordeaux.



# BOOK TWO

## KING OF ENGLAND

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### CHAPTER ONE

#### HENRY'S TRIUMPH

It was one thing to compel a helpless king to execute a deed of abdication, but another to ensure that the throne would pass to the man who had broken his power. In England the principle of an elective kingship had long been recognised ; and if in practice the succession to the throne had followed the common rule of inheritance it did not mean that this principle had been shelved. Henry of Bolingbroke was not Richard's heir in the strictly legal sense : if the common rule of inheritance was to be respected then the throne of England belonged by right to Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, in 1399 a boy of eight, who claimed lineal descent from Lionel of Clarence, the third of Edward III.'s sons. It was hardly to be expected that a country, harassed by the evils which inevitably arise from weak government, would entrust its fortunes to one so young as Edmund Mortimer. The need of the time was a strong central government, and that postulated the rule of a man of experience and courage.

Thus there arose a conflict between constitutional and common law ; and it cannot have failed to raise doubts in the minds of the propertied classes of the country. If the rights in kingship [taken as property] were to be transferred to one whose claim would not be admitted under the common rule of inheritance, then a dangerous precedent was established, and one which might at any time be used to rob the rich of their property. Fourteenth-century society was not prepared to admit that parliament possessed such power.

It was probably the respect for the common law of inheritance which induced Henry to attempt to claim the throne as his by right. Adam Usk relates how the learned men were brought together to test the truth of a story [not by any means new in 1399] that Edmund Crouchback was Henry III.'s eldest son, but that

on account of mental weakness his birthright had been set aside and his younger brother Edward preferred in his place.

Edmund Crouchback was the founder of the House of Lancaster, and it therefore followed that if the truth of the tale could be proved, Edward I., Edward II., Edward III., and Richard II. had had no rights in the kingship under the common law rule of inheritance. Unfortunately, by no stretch of the imagination could the learned men make good that claim: the evidence clearly showed that Edward I. was the elder brother.

Why did not Henry boldly claim the throne on grounds of conquest? He certainly toyed with the idea; but Sir William Thyrnyng, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, urged him not to stress it too strongly. As a lawyer Thyrnyng perceived the danger of its implications; not only would it characterise the usurpation as a violation of constitutional practice, but it would establish the precedent that succession to the throne was based on the principle of might is right; and the day might come when it might be asserted by a rival. It was Thyrnyng's influence which caused Henry to give all his actions at that critical time the appearance of legality.

On September 30, 1399, there assembled in the Great Hall at Westminster the parliament which was summoned by writs sent out in Richard's name on the day when he met his cousin in the castle of Flint. At one end of the hall stood the throne: it was draped richly in cloth of gold, and was unoccupied. Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, opened the proceedings with the customary sermon from the text: 'I have put my words in thy mouth'; and the significance of the text was soon revealed when he

announced that as the deputy of the late king he would read the deed of abdication. Then came the question: should the renunciation of the throne be accepted? The parliament-men wasted little time in registering a unanimous verdict in the affirmative.

Next came the reading of 'the articles of accusation' drawn up against Richard. There were more than thirty of them; and it is evident that considerable care had been taken in their preparation. So that their purport should be fully understood, they were read first in Latin and then in English.

*Art. I.* accused Richard of having 'wasted the treasure of the realm' so frivolously that grievous financial burdens were laid upon the shoulders of 'the poor commonalty.'

*Art. IV.* charged him with the complicity in the murder of his uncle, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester.

*Art. V.* related how the Cheshire archers were allowed to roam up and down the country and maltreat honest citizens without check from the king.

*Art. VIII.* charged Richard with ruling the country through the agency of the Committee of Eighteen, and not with the advice and consent of parliament.

*Art. X.* related how Richard had asked the Pope to excommunicate all who would subvert the statutes passed in the parliament of 1397-8. This was regarded as a violation of law, for parliament had repeatedly asserted the claim that the Pope had no political jurisdiction within the realm.

*Art. XI.* cited Richard's illegal interference with the election of sheriffs. *Art. XVIII.* continued the same tale by stating how the late king had permitted sheriffs to hold office for more than a year; and the result of such interference was made clear in *Art. XIX.*—the 'manipulation' of parliamentary elections.

*Art. XX.* accused Richard of maintaining spies throughout the country, and of acting upon their reports.

*Art. XXI.* charged him with being faithless in his dealings with foreign princes and with his own subjects.

*Art. XXVI.* alleged that Richard resorted to the use of courts

martial in order to rob old men ; for age prevented them from offering the only defence accepted in such courts [*i.e.* wager of battle].

*Art. XXVIII.* accused him of usurping the functions of the Chancellor in that he frequently granted 'prohibitions' when they had been refused in the Chancery.

The parliament-men were asked to decide whether the charges set out in 'the articles of accusation' were sufficiently grave to call for the deposition of Richard ; and when they signified their assent, they immediately elected eight of their number to draw up and carry out the sentence of deposition.

The commission of eight got quickly to work : indeed the whole proceedings seem to have been carried through with an almost indecent haste, as though the victorious party was afraid that delay might result in a change of mind. The eight commissioners took up their places in front of the vacant throne, and through the mouth of John Trefor, Bishop of St Asaph, delivered sentence.

. . . we understanding and considering the manifold crimes, hurts and harms done by Richard king of England, and misgovernance of the same by a long time, to the great decay of the said land, and utter ruin of the same shortly to have been, had not the grace of our God thereunto put the sooner remedy ; and also furthermore adverting, that the said Richard by acknowledging his insufficiency, hath of his own free will, renounced and given over the rule and governance of this land, with all rights and honours unto the same belonging, and utterly for his merits hath judged himself not unworthily to be deposed of all kingly majesty and royal state. We . . . well considering by good and diligent deliberation, by the power, name and authority to us . . . committed, pronounce and declare the same king Richard, before this to have been, and to be unprofitable, unable, unsufficient, and unworthie of the rule and governance of the foresaid realms and lordships, and of all rights and appurtenances to the same belonging. And for the same causes we deprive him of all kingly dignity and worship in himself. And we depose him by our sentence definitive, forbidding

expressly to all archbishops, bishops, and all other prelates, dukes, marquesses, earls, barons and knights, and all other men of the foresaid kingdom and lordships, subjects and lieges whatsoever they be, that none of them from this day forward, to the foresaid Richard as king and lord of the foresaid realms and lordships, be neither obedient nor attendant.

At the conclusion of the bishop's speech the parliament-men empowered him and his fellow commissioners formally 'to yield up' to Richard the homage and fealty of the nation over which he had once ruled.

Thereupon Henry, who occupied the accustomed place of the Duke of Lancaster and on that occasion sat between his uncle, the Duke of York, and the Bishop of Carlisle, rose, and making on forehead and breast the sign of the Cross, asserted his right to the vacant throne in a firm and clear voice.

In the name of God, Amen. I, Henry of Lancaster, challenge this reiaume, this the corone, with all the membris and appurtenaunce thereto, save the ryght blood comyng of the Kyng Henry, and thorghe that ryght that Gode of hys grace hath sent me, with the help of my kyn and my frendes to recover it; the which roiaume was in poynt to ben undon for defaute of governaunce and undoyng of the laws.

The members of the lords and commons were asked singly and collectively for their opinion on Henry's claim; and without a dissentient it was resolved that he should be their king.

It was perhaps fitting that the newly elected king should be led to his place on the throne by Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury. Not only was he the head of the Church in England, but he was also Henry's greatest friend. As they progressed through the hall members pressed upon them, shouting for joy because they had at last been saved from the capricious rule of a tyrant. When the hubbub had died down, the Archbishop preached a short sermon from the text in *1 Samuel ix. 17*: 'This man

shall reign over my people.' As Dr Wylie has pointed out that was 'an ominous text, and not very full of comfort had any cared to understand it in its original connection'; but the point which the preacher drove home was that parliament had chosen a *man* and not a *child* to direct the destinies of the country. Did he mean to convey to the assembly a scriptural justification for the passing over of the claims of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, or was it nothing more than an allusion to the childish tyranny of the late king?

At the end of the sermon Henry made a felicitous speech of thanks from the throne.

Syres, I thank yow espirituelx and temporelx, and alle the estates of the lond, and I do yow to wyte that it ys nought my wil that no man think that by wey of conquest y wolde desherte any man of hys heritage, fraunchis, or other ryghtes that hem ought to have, ne put hym out of that he hath and hath had in the gode lawes of this reiaume except hem that ben ageyn the gode purpos and the commune profyte of the reiaulme.

Henry's words could not have been more carefully chosen. In that gathering were many who were troubled in their minds as to where they stood with the new king. Some had even opposed his return: others had observed a judicious neutrality, being resolved not to imperil their lives and property in a quarrel, the issue of which was doubtful. Henry's words set their minds at rest: he meant to rule as a constitutional monarch and not as a despot, even though he had safeguarded his own rights 'by wey of conquest.' It appeared clear at the outset that there were to be neither recrimination nor vengeance.

One cannot help appraising the way in which the usurpation was carried through. In every particular Henry acted with the utmost dignity. The conscience of the law had been salved. In determining the succession custom had prevailed; for, it should be remembered, Henry's election was made by a vote of parliament. And

once he was acclaimed king he acted as though he had an indisputable title to the throne. That alone would do much to allay any fear in the mind of the people that the usurpation would perhaps herald in disorder and even civil war.

Before parliament was dissolved, Henry announced that the first parliament of his reign would assemble at Westminster on October 6. He was at pains to convince the members that the shortness of the notice would not be regarded as a precedent: on this occasion it was unavoidable because it was necessary for the security of the realm that his coronation should take place without delay.

On the appointed day, therefore, the members were in their places at Westminster. Henry presided, being supported by his two sons, Henry of Monmouth and Thomas; and their handsome appearance excited much favourable comment in the assembly. Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury, read what was in those days the King's Speech. He told the parliament-men that it was the king's resolve to respect the rule of law, showing neither favour to friends nor taking vengeance on enemies. Parliament was to participate in the business of government; and the members were to enjoy all the privileges of their office. The Church was to be left in full possession of her ancient liberties—comforting news for the clergy at a time when misguided men were going about the country clamouring for reforms in church doctrine and organisation. The archbishop wound up his speech with the observation that since the king did not feel that it was expedient for him to proceed with the routine business of parliament until he had been hallowed by the sacred ceremony of coronation the meetings would stand adjourned until October 14; but in the meantime the commons were at liberty to choose their Speaker; and the work of examining the petitions could be undertaken by the Triers.

The coronation was fixed for October 13, a day of

happy augury, for it was the feast of the Translation of St Edward Confessor, the saint who was thought to have English kingship in his special protection. Thus barely a fortnight was left in which to carry out all the preparations for the ceremony; and here and there one catches a glimpse of the feverish way in which the court officials did their work. Claims to perform 'coronation service' were received and dealt with by the Seneschal; but since this office was held by Henry's eleven years old son, Thomas, the actual work was done by a deputy, Sir Thomas Percy; and his was an unenviable position, for there were many claimants for the various offices.

On October 12, Henry, in the presence of a distinguished company, inaugurated the Order of the Bath. That ceremony took place in the Tower, and Adam Usk states that Richard was made to suffer the indignity of watching his cousin perform a duty which belonged by right to him. It was an age which found great delight in the establishment of knightly orders: Edward III. had founded the Order of the Garter; and in France and other continental countries a great variety of 'companionships' of knights existed. The significance of Henry's Order of the Bath has not infrequently been debated; but probably it was the occasion which suggested the title, for it had long been a custom of chivalry to devote the eve of a great undertaking to religious devotions, and the bathing of the body was the symbol of knightly purity. Among the forty odd knights admitted to the new order were the four sons of the king.

The rain was pelting down on that Sunday afternoon as Henry rode bareheaded through London's streets on his way from the Tower to Westminster. He was attended by his four sons, six dukes, six earls, and eighteen barons; and more than 6000 mounted men comprised the escort. The Londoners thronged the streets; and they greeted the new king enthusiastically. The mayor, sheriffs, aldermen, masters of the liveried companies, representatives of companies of foreign merchants resident in London,



joined together to give Henry an official welcome. In him they saw the one hope of stable government, so indispensable to the successful conduct of commercial undertakings. At Westminster Henry was met by the abbot, William Colchester, who escorted him to the room in the palace where he would lodge that night.

The Londoners were early astir on the coronation day : it was a holiday which the journeymen and apprentices were resolved to enjoy to the full. They thronged round the palace at Westminster to watch the gorgeous procession pass from the palace to the abbey church in which England's kings had been crowned for centuries. Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, as Constable, headed the procession : he bore in his hands the Lancaster Sword, so called because it had hung at Henry's side on the day when he had landed at Ravenspur. The Marquis of Dorset, Henry's bastard half-brother, and Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, each bore a sword

wrapped in red and bound round with golden bands to represent twofold mercy.

Behind them, and immediately in front of the king, walked his handsome young son, Henry of Monmouth, bearing aloft the *Curtana*

naked and without a point, the emblem of the execution of justice without rancour.

The king, clad in white, walked beneath a canopy of blue silk, borne by the Barons of the Cinque Ports ; and behind him came

all the peers of the realm, robed finely in red and scarlet and ermine.

The ancient office used at the coronation of the kings of England was said and sung by Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury ; and something in the nature of a sensation was caused when the news went round that the sacred oil used for the anointing of Henry had been

mysteriously given by the Blessed Virgin to St Thomas Becket when he was an exile in France, being brought from that country by ' the Good Duke ' Henry of Lancaster. A greater sensation, however, arose when it was whispered swiftly through the crowd that Henry's head had become infested with lice immediately after the archbishop had poured the holy oil upon it. Did not that signify that providence frowned upon the usurpation ? With men uneasy in their loyalties there was only one answer to that question.

The coronation was followed by the customary banquet. Henry sat alone on a dais at one end of the hall : the guests were placed round the tables below him. The young Earl of Arundel had the office of Pantler or Butler ; and the chief citizens of London assisted him in seeing that every guest was well supplied with meat and drink. Sir Thomas Erpyngham was the Chamberlain : it was his duty to hold the golden ewer and basin when the king washed before and after the meal. Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin,

covered the tables, and had for his fees all the table cloths, as well as those in the hall as elsewhere, when they were taken up.

The royal champion was Sir Thomas Dymmok ; and he did that service by reason of his mother's right to the manor of Scrivelsby in Lincolnshire. Adam Usk proudly records that he acted as counsel for Dame Margaret Dymmok when the Seneschal's court dealt with the claims for service at the coronation.

When the feasting was at its height, Sir Thomas Dymmok entered the banqueting hall, mounted on a destrier or war-horse. He was clad in full armour, and was girt with a sword with a golden hilt. Before him rode two esquires : the one carried a naked sword, the other a lance. A herald came forward, and from the four sides of the hall proclaimed that

if any man should say that his liege lord here present and king of England was not the right crowned king of England,

he [Sir Thomas] was ready to prove the contrary with his body, then and there, or when and wheresoever it might please the king.

Without waiting to hear whether any one would take up the challenge, Henry said :

If need be, Sir Thomas, I will in mine own person ease thee of this office !

Those words were greeted with a round of cheering in the hall. No man stepped forward to contest Henry's right to the throne as against that of either Richard or Edmund Mortimer.

Henry displayed great wisdom in his choice of men to fill the chief offices of state. The Archbishop of Canterbury went to the Chancery : he had served as Chancellor in Richard's reign, and was therefore acquainted with the business of the office. John Norbury, who became Treasurer, was new to ministerial responsibility ; but he had long been attached to Henry's household, and the king knew his sterling capabilities. Another new man was Sir Thomas Erpyngham upon whom devolved the duties of Chamberlain ; but here again service in Henry's household had revealed his fitness for office. The Keeper of the Privy Seal was Sir Richard Clifford. That appointment demonstrates Henry's readiness to trust old enemies ; for Clifford had been one of Richard's firmest friends and actually was named by the late king an executor in his will. Not a single judge was deprived of his office, although as a body the judges had shown a none too creditable subservience to the royal will in the days of Richard's despotism.

With these ministers Henry met parliament when the parliament-men re-assembled on October 14. As the king had requested, the commons during the recess had chosen their Speaker. He was one of the members for the county of Gloucester, a certain Sir John Cheyney ; and his election caused considerable stir in clerical dovecots, for not

only had he renounced his deacon's orders 'to aspire to the order of wedlak,' but he was known to be a sympathiser with the Lollards. Henry accepted the commons' candidate apparently without demur: he could hardly do otherwise without laying himself open to the charge of interference with one of the most jealously guarded parliamentary prerogatives. A crisis was averted when, on October 15, Cheyney begged to be relieved of his office on grounds of ill-health [his active employment later would appear to afford conclusive evidence that the excuse of ill-health was merely a matter of political expediency]. Henry readily granted his request, and at once accepted the substitute chosen by the commons, Sir John Durward, a member for the county of Essex and a man of considerable influence in that part of the country.

The programme of parliament was a full one; and the parliament-men set about their business with a will. They voted Henry the customary revenues attached to the crown; and in addition a special subsidy for three years. They annulled the acts passed in the parliament of 1397-8 as being contrary to the laws of the land; and much of the work of the Committee of Eighteen [appointed in that parliament] was also declared to be illegal. Henry delighted the assembly by frankly giving it as his opinion that that body had acted in derogation of parliament's prerogatives: in doing so he spared neither the memory of his own father nor the consciences of some of his supporters, who had served on the Committee of Eighteen. It was only right and proper that the forfeitures suffered by the Earls of Arundel and Warwick, the Archbishop of Canterbury, old John, Lord Cobham, and others should be cancelled; but Henry solidly refused to accept the principle, urged strongly by the commons, that there should be indemnification for the period of the forfeiture. He was prepared to make one exception: the Archbishop should be allowed to recover from his predecessor in respect of any loss or damage to the property of the see of Canterbury. Another highly popular royal decision was that the additions to the law

of treason in Richard's reign should be swept away, and that the famous Statute of Treason of 1351 alone should govern all definitions of treason. It was further decreed that the charters granted or renewed by Richard to corporations solely with the object of raising money by fines should be publicly burnt. And the business of the day [October 15] concluded with Henry's investiture of his eldest son, Henry of Monmouth, as Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester : the dukedoms of Lancaster and Aquitaine were bestowed upon him some days later.

October 16 witnessed a stormy meeting of parliament. The commons petitioned Henry to arrest *all* Richard's evil counsellors and to make them answer for the wrongs which they had done. Sir William Bagot was brought into the assembly ; and in order to clear himself of the charges brought against him, he accused Henry's cousin, Edward Plantagenet, Duke of Aumâle, of complicity in the murder of his uncle, Thomas of Woodstock. An ugly scene followed. The charge was hurled at the Duke from many quarters of the house. Challenges were freely given and accepted. It was only when Henry intervened that some semblance of order was restored.

The question of punishing Richard's friends dominated the proceedings of the following day. The aged Lord Cobham was relentless in his endeavours to bring them to justice ; and eventually his arguments convinced the parliament-men. The Duke of Surrey [Thomas Holland], the Earl of Gloucester [Thomas Despencer], and the Earl of Salisbury [John Montacute] were arrested and taken to the Tower. The Duke of Aumâle was sent to Windsor. The Duke of Exeter [John Holland] was lodged in the Lancastrian castle at Hertford. Henry gave orders that each of the prisoners was to be carefully examined ; and it was intimated that their fate would depend upon their ability to clear themselves of the charges brought against them.

Henry was quick to turn the situation to the advantage of the Crown. Each of the arrested noblemen had been

notoriously guilty of supporting liveried retainers of armed men, who were not only oppressors of the poor, but a menace to the authority of the central government; and by the practice of 'maintaining' suits in the law courts on behalf of their henchmen they had brought the law into contempt to the hurt of honest people. Parliament was thereupon persuaded to pass an act against livery and maintenance: henceforth it was to be an offence to give a badge or livery to armed retainers, and drastic penalties were prescribed for breaches of the statute. In point of fact this much-needed reform was never rigidly enforced: the evil habit of livery and maintenance was too deeply rooted to be easily eradicated, and it required a suicidal baronial war and the strong arm of Tudor government to compel obedience from the nobility.

Was it through the personal influence of the Archbishop of Canterbury that parliament armed Henry with a power which cut right across an established parliamentary prerogative—the right to modify a statute? The evidence is too scanty to enable us to answer this question one way or another; but it is a significant fact that by the consent of parliament Henry was given authority to modify the Statute of Provisors on the advice and consent of his council. The matter of papal interference in the affairs of the Church in England was one about which Englishmen held strong views: throughout the latter half of the fourteenth century the legislature had worked deliberately to remove the stigma that England was 'the milch cow of the papacy'; and in this anti-papal movement were united clergy and laymen.

One of the evils of the reign of Richard was the alienation of crown property in grants to favourites; and the parliament-men were anxious to ensure that the practice should not be continued by the new king. The commons, therefore, prayed Henry not to give grants to undeserving favourites; but, according to Adam Usk, their petition was regarded by John Trefor, Bishop of St Asaph, as an insolent interference with the royal prerogative; and

he rose in his place and read the commons a sharp lecture.

This petition is unmannerly and unjust, in that it argueth for niggardliness in the king, a thing which is contrary to all royalty, whereunto the bounty of an open hand is the rather thought to be seemly. It argueth too that subjects may fetter their king in his own inborn goodness. Therefore let not the king who giveth, but let him who seeketh unjustly or unworthily rather be punished.

The fate of the petition was sealed ; but Henry was too shrewd a man not to take the hint which it contained.

More difficult was the question of Richard's future. On October 21 the commons petitioned Henry to put the late king on trial ; but Henry hesitated about agreeing to a step which would place his cousin in the power of men who were resolved to have his blood ; and he endeavoured to gain time by answering his petitioners to the effect that he must discuss the matter with the lords spiritual and temporal. This he actually did some days later. At that meeting, however, he made it perfectly clear that he had no intention of being a party to Richard's death ; but he personally advocated the imprisonment of the late king in a secret place, where he would be guarded by persons unknown to him, and from which it would be almost impossible for him to escape or be rescued. The lords concurred in this decision ; and on October 27 it was unanimously approved by the commons.

Two days later parliament dealt with Richard's friends, to whom was then added Henry's bastard half-brother, John Beaufort. As peers these noble friends of the late king had the right to be judged and sentenced by their own order ; and this right was in no way challenged. They were brought into parliament and heard the following sentence read over them :

That the duke Awmarle and duke of Suthrey, and eke of Excetir, schul lese her names, her honoure, and her dignite. And the markeis of Dorcete, and the erl of Gloucetir, schul

lese the same for hem and her eyeris. And alle the castelle and maneris which were the dukes of Gloucetir, thei schul lese withoute ony grace. And alle the godes that thei had sith that tyme that he was arested, thei schuld forgo. Tho that thei had befor that tyme, thei schuld have stille: but thei schuld gyve no lyveries, as othir lordis doo. And if evyr it maye be knowe that thei make ony gadering in coumfort of Richard, sumtyme Kyng, thei to be punchid as tretouris.

With the exception of Salisbury and Bagot none of Richard's friends suffered a long term of imprisonment. John Beaufort was never put under restraint; and all the other lords were at liberty by about the end of November 1399. Bagot was not so fortunate: he was kept actually in chains until April 1400, and only secured his liberty a year later.

The treatment which Henry meted out to men who were known to be staunch supporters of Richard's cause laid him open to considerable criticism. Some thought that in sparing their lives he had deliberately ignored the wishes of his loyal subjects; others whispered that the accused men had secured their freedom by means of heavy fines paid over to Henry. The Londoners in particular felt strongly on the subject of punishing Richard's friends; and a mob outside Westminster Hall howled for their deaths. But Henry held firm to his policy of clemency, even in the face of much hostile criticism: he had no wish to buttress his throne with the broken bodies of members of the noblest families in the land. Subsequent events were to prove that such confidence was misplaced; but that knowledge should not be allowed to obscure the sincerity of his intentions.

On the day after parliament had agreed to the secret imprisonment of Richard, the unhappy man was removed from his prison in the Tower, and in the dress of a forester taken down the river to Gravesend, whence he went to the castle of Leeds in Kent. How long they kept him there it is now impossible to say; but it was not long before he



was safely under lock and key in the grim Lancastrian castle of Pontefract.

As long as he was allowed to remain alive, it was inevitable that he should become the focus of treachery against the new dynasty ; and the friends who endeavoured to serve him best were the very men to hasten him to his death. About the middle of December a conspiracy was on foot to rescue Richard and replace him on the throne. The conspirators were Huntingdon, Kent, Rutland, Salisbury, Roger Walden [the deposed Archbishop of Canterbury], Thomas Merke [the deposed Bishop of Carlisle], William Colchester [Abbot of Westminster], Sir Thomas Blount, and Jean Paule [a French doctor attached to Richard's household]. Their plan was a simple one. A number of their supporters were to be sent into Windsor Castle with carts of harness and armour, ostensibly in readiness for the grand tournament which Henry had announced would be held there on Twelfth Night, 1400, as part of the royal Christmas festivities. On a given signal they would overpower the guards, admit their friends outside the castle, and then when Henry and his family had been killed, they would proclaim the restoration of Richard. Realising that it might be some little time before Richard could join them, yet knowing that his presence was essential to the success of the *coup d'état*, they hit upon the idea of using a certain Essex priest, Richard Maudeleyn, who bore a striking resemblance to the late king, as a substitute until such a time as Richard could be released from prison.

Even before the details of this conspiracy were known in court circles an atmosphere of suspicion existed at Windsor. A strange form of sickness attacked the young Henry of Monmouth and other members of the royal household ; and it was at once thought that an attempt was being made to dispatch the royal family by poison. Out of sorts himself, Henry, in a fit of irritation, expressed the wish that Richard was dead ; but when some of the nobles attending him suggested that they should translate

his wish into action, he roundly lectured them for making such a suggestion, though he did announce that Richard would die if any attempt were made to restore him.

Two accounts are given of the way in which the plans of the conspirators leaked out. The one, related in *An English Chronicle*, has a really human flavour about it; and may well be true in substance.

. . . a man of the kyngis hous lay alle nyghte with a comyne wommanne in Londoun, and in the morou she saide to him, "Farwelle frende," said she, "for I shalle nevyr se the more." "Whi so?" saide he. "Forsoth," saide she, "for the erlle of Huntyngdoun, the erl of Salesbury, the duke of Surrey, and meny othir, lyen in waite aboute Kyngestoun, forto sle the kyng and the Archebisschoppe as thay come fro Wyndesore, purposing to restore king Richard ayenne to his kyngdoun." "How knowest thou this?" saide he. "Forsoth," saide she, "on of thair men lay with me the lattir nyght, and told me this." And he anon in haste rood to the kyng, and tolde him as the wommanne hadde said.

In the same record is the more generally accepted account of the betrayal of the conspiracy. The conspirators had bound themselves by solemn promises to stand together and to meet at Kingston on January 4 in readiness for the attack on Windsor. When that day came, they found that Rutland was absent; and immediately a letter was sent reminding him of his pledge. The earl showed the letter to his father, the Duke of York; and at the same time communicated to him the details of the plot. The Duke lost no time in warning Henry of the danger which threatened him. The king realised that there was not a moment to lose: taking his sons with him, he rode as fast as horses could carry them to London, being met outside the city by the mayor [Thomas Knolles], who told him that that rumour had it that the rebels had 6000 men in the field!

At no time in his kingly career did he show greater coolness than in the face of this danger. His actions betrayed no sign of panic: the most careful arrangements were made to cope with the situation. Orders were im-

mediately issued to the sheriffs that the rebel leaders were to be arrested and their property seized ; and by proclamation the people were warned that participation in the revolt would be punished by loss of limb or death. The militia of a number of Midland shires was mustered ; and steps were taken to ensure that adequate forces were available to meet attacks from the side of France. In less than twenty-four hours Henry had at his back 20,000 men, recruited chiefly from the train-bands of London : amid great popular rejoicing he reviewed his troops on Hounslow Heath in the afternoon of January 5.

Suspecting betrayal, but apparently ignorant of the source of Henry's information, the conspirators at Kingston decided to strike before the appointed time. Taking with them about 400 or 500 men they marched swiftly to Windsor and took the castle, not many hours after Henry and his sons had escaped ; and after sacking the place, they did their best to attract men to their cause. The king's escape from Windsor was presented to the public as proof of his impotence to deal with the emergency. Such was the boast of Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, to the girl queen, Isabella :

O Benedicite, who may this bee that Herri of Lancastir fled fro my presens, he that is so worthi man of armes. Therfor, frendis, know this, that Herri of Lancastir hath take the Toure at London, and oure very Kyng Richard hath brokyn prison, and hath gadered a hundred thousand fyghting men.

But Kent's words lost their force of appeal when the news came [by the mouth of Rutland, so it is said] that Henry was marching westwards at the head of a great army to put down the rebellion. The leaders made an attempt to run for Cheshire, the one district in England where Richard was sure of friends ; but their plans were thwarted by the men of Cirencester. Under the leadership of John Cosyn, the bailiff of the borough, armed townsmen surrounded the inn in which two of the rebel leaders, Kent and Salisbury, had put up for the night with their

personal bodyguards; and when by force they tried to leave in the morning, Cosyn and his men drove them indoors. The only alternative was to sell their lives dearly or to make terms with the townsmen. At length, being promised their lives, they surrendered; and were at once put under restraint and lodged in the priory of the Augustinian Canons.

By chance a house in the town went on fire, and the mob immediately thought that the imprisoned earls' friends were counter-attacking in order to rescue the prisoners. A crowd of townsmen dashed to the priory bent upon killing Kent and Salisbury; and despite the effort of Thomas, Lord Berkeley, the captain of the guard, lynch law ran its course. The earls were dragged unceremoniously into the street, and beheaded [January 7]. The heads were thereupon put into a basket and sent 'like fish for the market' to the king, who with the main body of his army was in the neighbourhood of Oxford.

By some means or other Despencer and Huntingdon managed to escape from Cirencester before the townsmen laid hands upon them. The former fled westwards, intending no doubt to take refuge in Morgannwg where he held lands and the people were known to favour the restoration of Richard; but he had not gone far before he was apprehended by loyalists, who sent him to Bristol, where once again the mob took the law into their own hands, and beheaded him [January 7].

Huntingdon, on the other hand, thought it wisest to return to London. But there was a price on his head, and his presence in the capital was quickly suspected, with the result that crowds set out to find him. He determined, therefore, to escape overseas. With the object of finding a ship in one of the larger ports of East Anglia or Kent he set off down the Thames in a small boat with two companions; but the wind drove them ashore on the Essex bank, and they had to take refuge with Aubrey de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who was married to Huntingdon's daughter. Once again their hiding-place was discovered: to escape

the mob which was hard on their heels another attempt was made to get overseas. Again the wind sent the fugitives back to land, and it was at Barrow Hall, in the low-lying district of Shoebury, that Huntingdon fell into the hands of his pursuers. They rushed him off to Colchester, and would have executed him there and then had not Joanna, Countess of Hereford, intervened on his behalf. This good lady had no intention of sparing the captured earl: her purpose in securing possession of his body was to make sure that he perished ignominiously. Had he not taken a leading part in the proceedings which led up to the death of her brother, the Earl of Arundel, and the murder of her son-in-law, the Duke of Gloucester? Was it not openly said that Huntingdon's friend, Despencer, was responsible for the death of Gloucester's young son, Humphrey? None knew better than the Countess the anguish of mind of the boy's mother, who had escaped from the world into the quiet cloisters of Barking and was soon to die there of a broken heart.

Whatever vengeance the Countess may have reserved for Huntingdon, the men of Essex anticipated it. They marched to her castle of Pleshy and howled like wolves beneath the grim ramparts for the death of the prisoner. To resist them would have resulted in bloodshed, and eventually the Countess gave her prisoner into their hands. There was no trial: the mob took Huntingdon out, and cut off his head on the very spot where [so men said] the Duke of Gloucester had been placed under arrest in 1397. There is a disgusting tale to the effect that when the young Earl of Arundel came to Pleshy shortly after the execution had taken place [he had been sent there by Henry to take charge of Huntingdon] he publicly reviled the headless body.

The back of the rebellion was broken. At Oxford Henry sat in judgment on a number of the ringleaders; and no longer was he disposed to deal leniently with men who had abused his clemency. They were sentenced to death, and their goods were forfeited. On the other hand,

Henry did not deal harshly with the rank and file in the rebel force : they were more to be pitied than blamed for having taken up arms against the king at the instigation of misguided men ; and it was part of his policy to win, and not alienate, the affections of the people.

Henry sent ahead to London the grisly relics of his triumph over his enemies. The heads and quarters of the executed traitors

were slung upon poles and between men's shoulders . . . and afterwards salted.

Some went to adorn London Bridge : others were distributed among different cities and towns, grim reminders of the penalty which traitors must pay for resistance to the new dynasty.

Henry himself entered London on January 15. He was met by the Archbishop and Bishops, the Mayor and civic officials ; and in solemn procession they escorted him to Paul's Church where a joyous *Te Deum* was sung, and the Archbishop preached from the text : ' Behold, I bring you good tidings.' On the following day Henry and his sons, attended by the chief barons of the realm, passed along London's streets. The people cheered and cheered again as the king rode by, and all along the route were taken up the shouts :

God preserve our Lord King Henry and our Lord the Prince !  
and :

God bless our King Henry, and God bless my Lord the Prince ! Now we will wage war with all the world, except the Flemings !

Henry had demonstrated his fitness to rule over the kingdom. In less than a fortnight he had crushed a dangerous rebellion : the evil counsellors of the late king had perished. Whether Henry would have sanctioned the execution of men like Huntingdon, Kent, and Salisbury, or would have

sent them to long terms of imprisonment, no one can say, for the mob saved him the trouble of making a decision.

At last Henry was compelled to recognise that Richard alive was a dangerous menace to his position as king. How or when Richard met his end is among the dark mysteries of history: nor can it be determined that Henry himself was a party to his death.

At Pontefract Richard's keeper was Sir Thomas Swynford, son of the woman whom John of Gaunt first kept as mistress and then made Duchess of Lancaster. Adam Usk declared that Swynford tormented the prisoner to death 'with starving fare.' Capgrave, on the other hand, said:

he [Richard] peyned himself and deyed for hungir.

A French version, widely accepted after the end of the fifteenth century, is more dramatically picturesque. It related how Henry, before leaving London to crush the rebellion, sent a certain Sir Peter Exton north to Pontefract with orders to kill Richard. Seven men attended Exton when he went into the room where the prisoner lay; but Richard, perceiving their purpose, seized an axe from one of the party, and fighting like a madman in defence of his life killed four of them, being finally struck down by two terrible blows from Exton's axe. Research has shown that there is no truth in this story: not only is Sir Peter Exton unknown, but when an examination of Richard's remains was made at the end of the eighteenth century no trace of a wound in the skull could be found.

Adam Usk fixed the date of Richard's death as February 28; but Dr Wylie brought it forward to 'about the middle of January.' By the beginning of February the majority of people in the country believed that Richard was no longer living; but there is strong suspicion, not altogether unsupported by evidence, that his death did not take place until about February 14.

The council advised Henry to have the body brought to London

in order that they [the people] might have certain knowledge of his [Richard's] death.

The trunk and limbs were sealed in lead ; but the face was uncovered

from the brow to the throat.

Every outward mark of respect was paid to the corpse as it was borne southwards from Pontefract, though no attempt was made to keep back the crowds which flocked to see the dead king's visage. The body lay in solemn state for one day and night in Paul's Church. Then followed the customary requiem, at which Henry insisted upon personally carrying the pall ; and when the service was ended the body was handed over to Dominican Friars to be laid to rest in their church at Chiltern Langley. Wrote Capgrave :

At the byriyng was the bischop of Chestir, the abbot of Seynt Albones and the abbot of Waltham, and fewe others.

It was the dead Richard who called for men's pity. Adam Usk, for example, was an avowed supporter of the usurpation ; but that loyalty did not blind him to the tragedy of the late king's life ; and the tribute which he paid him, when he wound up his account of Richard's death, is probably as sincere as it is rhetorical.

And now, Richard, fare thee well ! king indeed [if I may call thee so] most mighty ; for after death all might praise thee, hadst thou, with the help of God and thy people, so ordered thy deeds as to deserve such praise. But, though well endowed as Solomon, though fair as Absalom, though glorious as Ahasuerus, though a builder excellent as the great Belus, yet, like Chosroes, king of Persia, who was delivered into the hands of Heraclius, didst thou in the midst of thy glory, as Fortune turned her wheel, fall most miserably into



the hands of duke Henry, amid the smothered curses of thy people.

In March 1400, Henry himself sanctioned the expenditure of £16, 13s. 4d. for a thousand Masses, so that Richard's soul might rest in peace.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE REVOLT OF THE WELSH

THROUGHOUT the greater part of his reign the principality of Wales was in revolt against Henry's authority. Never before had the Welsh made such a resolute attempt to throw off the yoke of the hated English overlords · never before was the English position so hopelessly jeopardised. In the person of Owen Glyn Dŵr the people of Wales had a leader who was neither to be deterred by the clannish jealousies of his own countrymen nor terrified by the marching armies of an English king. Driven to rebellion by the implacable hatred of a rapacious neighbour, Owen quickly turned a personal quarrel into a great national uprising, which if it were not inspired by what is now called *nationalism* was provoked by the brutal way in which the English had outraged the feelings of the Welsh people in church and state.

Henry bungled the Welsh 'affair' in the most hopeless way. Not only did he ignore the experience which his predecessors on the English throne had bought so dearly during their wars against the Welsh, but he made no attempt to understand the motives which underlay the rebellion. A hundred years before his time Edward I. had discovered that a rising of the Welsh people was not to be put down by a series of warlike progresses through the principality. The natural poverty of the country inured the Welsh to material misfortunes, while at the same time rendered it impossible for a foreign expeditionary force to live for any length of time 'on the country.' More than once a magnificently equipped invading force dragged itself

miserably out of the principality because men and beasts were dying of hunger and the enemy would not come to battle.

The real strength of Welsh resistance lay in their grim hill sanctuaries. There a rebellious people could watch in perfect safety an English king dissipating the might of his power in the plains and valleys: there the fine spirit of independence was quickened by the songs of cunning bards, who related in verse the achievements of ancestors in the days before the Englishmen set foot in Wales. The very language in which those songs were sung formed an unbridgable gulf between the two peoples; for the day had not yet dawned when men knew that a conquest could only be retained by rigid respect for the language and institutions of the conquered.

If the Englishman thought that he was vastly superior to the native Welshman, the feeling was reciprocated no less intensely by the Welshman. A succession of text-book writers has left the impression upon the minds of generations of Englishmen that the people of mediæval Wales languished in a state of barbarism. If a Welshman may be forgiven for making the observation, such a conception is typical of the Englishman's outlook on those lands and peoples which have been forced to submit to English domination. The truth is that there was little difference between the two countries in the Middle Ages. The soil of Wales being poorer than that of England, it was only to be expected that the cultivators in the principality should not be so well off as their English neighbours; but this material deficiency was more than made good by the greater economic and political freedom enjoyed under the tribal laws of Wales; and this meant that class distinctions were given less prominence than in England. Lands and treasure might raise men above their fellows even in mediæval Wales; but social superiority brought with it patriarchal obligations of the most benevolent kind; and the relationship of the Welsh gentleman to his tenants was not accompanied by any of the rigid *formulae* of feudalism.

There is no doubt that the strength of the blood tie in mediæval Wales militated against the growth of a proper national spirit. Clans were notorious for their hatreds and feuds; and forces which might be successfully used in the cause of nationality are too often spent in senseless family quarrels.

While it is difficult to evaluate the cultural standards of both countries, there is little doubt that as far as the ordinary people were concerned the advantage lay with the Welsh. In Wales a higher cultural level was maintained by the everyday use of a language which lends itself in a peculiar way to the kind of poetry which goes direct to the hearts of a people; and the support which was given to the bards or poets of mediæval Wales is some indication of the love which the people bore them. Moreover, there was a constant flow of Welsh students to the university of Oxford and the law schools at Westminster; and it is not an accident of chance that we find such eminent Welshmen as John Trefor, John Trefnant, David Hanmer, and Adam Usk playing an important part in the public affairs of England in Richard's and Henry's reigns.

The French wars of Edward III.'s reign did much to adjust the balances in the Welshman's favour. Had not the spectacular victories of Edward and his son, Edward Black Prince, been won by the deadly shooting of Welsh archers? As long ago as the time of Giraldus Cambrensis the skill of Welsh archers had excited wonder and admiration: a hundred years later it won for Edward I. crushing victories over the Scots. Men who returned to Wales after the campaigns of Edward III. and his son were not likely to take kindly to constant assertion of racial superiority made by English landlords in Wales; and it only required the emergence of a popular leader to change them into dangerous enemies of the government which they had once served with such distinction and credit.

In fairness to Henry it must be admitted that the trouble which he experienced in Wales was not of his own making. But a wiser ruler would have met it in a very different

way. Henry seems to have been obsessed with the idea that the whole of Wales was pro-Richard from the outset of the rebellion ; whereas in effect Richard's cause was very half-heartedly supported in the principality. It is true that in certain districts of North Wales Richard's friends probably outnumbered his enemies ; but, as has already been seen, they did nothing to save him from the clutches of his cousin when he took refuge among them in August 1399. What happened was this : once the personal quarrel between Owen Glyn Dŵr and Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin, developed into a rebellion against the English power in Wales, Welshmen protested their loyalty to Richard merely because it provided them with some justification for resisting the man who had robbed him of his throne. It is significant that when the rebels took up the claim of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, they were careful to safeguard the one thing which was then uppermost in their minds—the independence of their native land.

It was a friendship which turned Wales against Henry. He had the utmost faith in Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin : he was even willing to accept his judgments without inquiry. Grey was Henry's evil genius in Wales : he not only drove Owen Glyn Dŵr to armed revolt, but it was Henry's friendship for Grey which eventually turned Harry Hotspur into a rebel. That Grey was the worst type of English marcher lord there is little doubt : he was rapacious and domineering, and he went out of his way to show his contempt for all Welshmen. Had Henry taken just measure of Grey's character he might have experienced no serious hostility from the side of Wales ; for the matter at issue between Owen and Grey was one which could have been settled in the civil courts of the land.

Fortunately, the weight of domestic business and ill-health compelled Henry to leave the direction of affairs in Wales to his eldest son, Henry of Monmouth, who under the able guidance of Harry Hotspur and Thomas Percy—men well versed in marcher politics—grasped the gravity

of the situation, and then framed plans for dealing with it successfully. It was in Wales that the young Henry learnt the lessons of war which stood him in good stead when he set out to conquer France: it was in Wales that he was able to test the abilities of the military captains who were to serve him so faithfully on the other side of the English Channel. Thus the rebellion of Owen Glyn Dŵr must take a more prominent place in a life of Henry of Monmouth than in one dealing with his father.<sup>1</sup>

Owen Glyn Dŵr was a cultured Welsh landlord, who held estates at Glyndyfrdwy and Cynllaith Owen, the former being situated in the valley of the Dee not far west from Llangollen, and the latter in what is now the parish of Llansilin. There is no evidence that he had strong nationalist leanings until circumstances compelled him to assume the title of Prince of Wales. Tradition maintains that Owen was an esquire in the retinue of Henry, when Earl of Derby; but it is highly doubtful whether this was so, though it is by no means unlikely that he spent part of his youth in the fitzAlan household of Chirk, close by his father's house. Owen conceivably may have been a student at Oxford: he was certainly a *juris apprentices* or barrister-at-law, and such a qualification was only to be had after a long period of study in the law schools attached to the royal courts at Westminster. Margaret, Owen's wife, was the daughter of Sir David Hanmer of Maelor Saesnig, who after a successful career as sergeant-at-law was given a seat on the bench in the Court of the King's Bench by Richard.

The estates of Glyndyfrdwy and Cynllaith Owen were held *in capite* of the English king by a Welsh tenure called *pennaeth*. This compelled their owner to march with his men to war at the English king's cost whenever summoned to do so; and from the evidence which Owen gave at

<sup>1</sup> The rebellion of Owen Glyn Dŵr is discussed from the Welsh and English standpoints in my *Owen Glyn Dŵr* [Scholartis Press] and my *Henry V.* [Barker].

Chester in the case of *Scrope v. Grosvenor*, it is clear that he and his men were in the English expeditionary force which marched to Scotland in 1384-5. His exploits in the north provided two of the most famous Welsh bards of the time, Iolo Goch and Gruffydd Llwyd, with themes for songs, long to be sung in their patron's homes.

Owen, however, could boast of descent from two of the princely houses of Wales. On his father's side he was in the direct descent from the princes of Powys; and his mother was a member of the great house of Deheubarth, the South Wales principality. He was a man of wealth—probably the richest of the native Welsh landlords; and the hospitality of his households at Carrog [in Glyndyfrdwy] and Sycharth [in Cynllaith Owen] was a byword with his fellow-countrymen. And for forty-one years [he was almost certainly born in 1359] Owen lived an uneventful life, breaking the monotony of managing his estates and dispensing hospitality to his friends by an occasional visit to London, regular service in the county court of Merioneth, and waiting upon his king when summoned to do so.

There is some mystery surrounding the cause of the quarrel between Owen and his neighbour, Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin, but there is every reason to think that it originated in the latter's desire to enrich himself and extend his power at Owen's expense. In the hill country between Dee and Clwyd lay a 'peece of commons' called by the Welsh Croesau: it had always belonged to the owners of Glyndyfrdwy. Some time in Richard's reign Grey seized Croesau; but Owen put the law on him; and his neighbour at Ruthin was ordered to make restitution. Towards the end of 1399 the act of robbery was repeated. Owen at once set off for London to obtain redress, and his case was actually placed before the king in parliament. But Henry was hostile from the first; and contemptuously said:

What care we for these barefooted scrubs!

As a Welshman John Trefor, Bishop of St Asaph, realised that Henry was playing with fire, and boldly

counselid the lordis of the parlement that they sholde not mystrete the said Oweyne, lest he made the Welshmenne arise.

But his warning left them unmoved :

the lordis of parlement ansuerde and saide they set nought be him [Owen].

So Owen returned to Wales with a grievance : he had acted within the law, and for apparently no good reason the law had failed him.

Nevertheless it took more than a personal grievance to drive Owen to rebellion : he might possibly have sat down quietly under the royal injustice had not his enemy, Grey, thought that the time was ripe further to discredit him in Henry's eyes. In his capacity as Chief Marcher of North Wales it was Grey's duty to summon the tenants *in capite* to muster with the royal army ; and when he was ordered to perform this duty in preparation for Henry's expedition against the Scots he delayed delivery of the writ to his neighbour at Glyndyfrwdy until it was too late for Owen either to appear in person in the royal army or to send an explanation. Owen's non-appearance naturally aroused Henry's suspicions, particularly at a time when the air was filled with rumours about the treasonable activities of Richard's supporters ; and without asking for an explanation of his conduct Henry pronounced him contumacious, and almost certainly ordered Grey to arrest the deserter.

On September 16, 1400, Owen and his friends, at a secret meeting in his house at Carrog, bound themselves by a solemn oath to make war against the English ; and within two days hundreds of resolute Welshmen were enlisted under his banner. On St Matthew's Day [September 21] the rebel force hurled itself into the town of Ruthin, *en fête* for the great fair of the year. The



townsmen were overwhelmed ; many were killed ; their homes were pillaged and burnt. Alone the red-walled castle defied the rebels and, if Grey was in residence, saved his skin ; for Owen's men were out for blood that day.

Down the fertile Vale of Clwyd marched Owen and his followers, venting their wrath in the most brutal way on the English settlers in Denbigh and Rhuddlan ; and then going by way of Flint, Hawarden, and Holt they threw themselves savagely into Salop. Oswestry suffered terribly at their hands : a similar fate would assuredly have overtaken Shrewsbury had not Hugh, Lord Burnell, with a local force defeated Owen in a sharp encounter on the banks of the Fyrnwy. This reverse damped the Welshmen's ardour ; they broke and ran for safety in their impregnable hills, and the rebellion appeared to have petered out somewhat ignominiously.

Henry learnt of the unrest in North Wales on the day after Owen and his friends had made their solemn compact at Carrog. He was on his way back from Scotland and was resting at Northampton when a Welsh loyalist, Deicws ap Gruffydd, burst in upon him with the news that the men of North Wales were out with Owen. The king betrayed no sign of panic : with quiet efficiency he made ready to conduct a military progress through the disaffected regions. Shire levies were ordered to join him at Shrewsbury : one prominent Welshman, Gronw ap Tudur, was summarily executed there, no doubt in the belief that his fate would induce his fellow-countrymen to render greater loyalty to the English king.

Early in October Henry and his son, Henry of Monmouth, set out from Shrewsbury with a magnificent army. They met with no resistance until they reached Beaumaris : there a force under Rhys Ddu of Erddreiniog, one of Owen's cousins and an ancestor of Henry VII., attacked the royal army, but with what success it is impossible to say. It is known that the Welsh leader got away ; and Henry could only impress his authority upon the people of the neighbourhood by a discreditable sack of the Franciscan friary

at Llanfaes. The royal army was in Caernarvon on October 9, where Henry received a profession of loyalty from the townsmen. But he had had enough of campaigning in Wales: the hopeless poverty of the country gave rise to murmurings in the rank and file of the army; and arrears of pay [a regular grievance with mediæval soldiers] were responsible for acts of insubordination. Going back by way of Mawddwy Henry led his men into Shrewsbury on October 13.

It is obvious that Henry's impression of the situation in Wales was that it was a somewhat insignificant rebellion of a number of disaffected Welsh gentry; and he was consequently disposed to take a tolerant view. He announced that a general pardon would be granted to all rebels who made a formal submission before the next meeting of parliament; but he foolishly excluded Owen and his brothers-in-law, Gruffydd and Philip Hanmer and Robert Puleston, declaring their lands forfeit to the Crown. Had the king's pardon been extended to Owen and his friends there is little doubt that the revolt would have ended: as it was, he merely provided them with another and weighty excuse for resistance to his authority—the regaining of their lands.

Nor did the parliament-men, when they assembled in London in January 1401, take a more statesmanlike view of the situation. The members from the border shires not unnaturally were apprehensive about the safety of their constituencies; and in strong language they urged Henry to adopt firm measures to crush the power of the Welsh rebels. Petitions detailed how Welshmen studying in Oxford and Cambridge or working in England were secretly making their way back to Wales to join the malcontents; and a report from the Chamberlain of Caernarvon stated that the rebels were endeavouring to obtain help from the

men of the Owt Yles and of Scotland.

At last Henry yielded; and statutes were introduced to curb the freedom of Welshmen both within Wales and England.

No Welshman was to be allowed to purchase or hold lands in a number of border boroughs ; and Welshmen already residing in them were required to give security for their good behaviour. For a period of three years no Englishman could be convicted in Wales in any action brought by a Welshman, unless he was convicted by an English judge and a jury of Englishmen. Mixed marriages were prohibited ; and the lords marcher were commanded to see to it that their castles were adequately garrisoned and provisioned.

Perhaps in fairness to Henry mention should be made of the fact that he repeated his offer of a general pardon even after these statutes had become law ; but his action really only complicated the position, for not only was Owen still excluded from this pardon, but the exemption was extended to two of the most desperate men in North Wales, Rhys Ddu of Erddreiniog, and his brother, Gwilym ap Tudur, who came from the Anglesey mansion of Penmynydd. There could be no peace in North Wales as long as men wielding such wide influence with their fellow-countrymen were placed outside the king's protection.

It was not Owen, but his cousins from Penmynydd, who delivered the next blow against Henry's authority in North Wales. On Good Friday [April 1], 1401, Rhys and Gwilym ap Tudur captured the great fortress of Conway by a ruse. Gwilym and a party of men held it from within : his brother, Rhys, with a much stronger force, lurked in the neighbourhood in order to hamper English attempts to regain the stronghold. Owen, rather surprisingly, made no move whatever to join forces with them.

At the head of the English government in Wales was Henry of Monmouth ; but his youth made it impossible for him to take full responsibility for the direction of affairs, and his father had wisely given him the services of a man of wider experience in the administration of marcher lands—Harry Hotspur, the son of the Earl of Northumberland. Together they faced the problem which confronted

them at Conway. They invested the castle with a competent armed force, and then went out of their way to win the affection of the people in the locality, rightly knowing that on the slightest provocation they would throw in their lot with the rebels in and around Conway. In a despatch the king was duly informed of the steps which had been taken to regain Conway, and in a fulsome reply to his son he commended his and Hotspur's policy. But when he was eventually told that they had come to terms with the rebels [and the terms were by no means discreditable to the English], Henry sharply reminded them that rebels ought to be punished 'according to their deserts,' and went on to describe the articles of capitulation as

not at all honourable to us, but a matter of most evil precedent.

Such an unwarranted reproach must have rankled with a man of Hotspur's proud spirit. No one could say that he had not discharged his duties as Justiciar of North Wales in the best interests of the English king. Had he not, at the very time when his men were besieging the castle in Conway, fitted out at his own cost another force and led it against a rebel army operating in the neighbourhood of Dolgelley? Not once, but many times, Hotspur had told his king that money was needed to carry on the work in North Wales; but no notice was taken of his words; and Henry left him to do what he could—at his own expense.

It has been suggested that this refusal to meet the demands of the Percies for money expended in the royal interest was part of a deep-laid scheme to diminish their power by robbing them of their wealth. Henry was certainly not above such a mean action. Kingship changed his character: his natural shrewdness was sharpened as a result of dealings with subjects who placed self-interest before patriotism; and the law of self-preservation taught him not to set too high a value upon scrupulous behaviour towards members of the noble class.

On July 3, 1401, Henry received an urgent request from Hotspur for funds to carry on the administration in

North Wales : more significant was the hint which accompanied it—that Hotspur felt that his services were not being appreciated in royal quarters. At the end of that month, or early in August, he left Wales to return to his native North Country ; and he carried with him bitter memories of the slighting way in which the king had treated him.

The recapture of Conway coincided with a renewal of Owen's rebelliousness [June 1401]. His men carried fire and sword into the heart of North Wales ; and they turned south to win a signal victory in the Hyddgen valley against a strong force of Flemings from Pembroke, who tried to check his advance into South Wales. Rebel companies roamed up and down the border districts, the Welsh boasting that they would exterminate all who spoke the English language ; and it is not surprising that their lawless depredations struck terror into the hearts of the inhabitants. Well might Owen claim that he was undisputed master of North and Central Wales ; for the English skulked behind the thick walls of the Edwardian fortresses, and were too feeble to give the rebels battle.

Henry at his court was besieged with messengers who told him the wildest tales : they all were confident that unless he went to the rescue of the harassed districts his loyal subjects would be slain by the fierce Welshmen. Henry's pity went out to them, and he commanded the sheriffs of a number of shires to send the levies from the shires to Worcester by June 5, 1401 ; but just as everything was ready for the advance into Wales, news came that Owen had suffered a serious reverse and that his men were flying helter-skelter for their hills. The royal army was disbanded ; and Henry left the border.

What had happened it is difficult to know. But in his campaign in Central Wales, Owen did certainly come to grief when he ventured to attack Welshpool : he was opposed by John Charlton, Lord of Powys, who not only prevented the rebels from getting possession of his castle, but drove them out of the district with great loss. But

the check was temporary: by the end of August the greater part of North and Central Wales was out with Owen.

On September 18 the shire forces were again summoned to meet Henry at Worcester

on 1 October or the morrow at the latest.

In the writs of mobilisation Henry made no attempt to hide the seriousness of the situation in the principality.

. . . the king is informed that Owen Glyndourdy and other rebels of Wales in no small number have risen in insurrection against his majesty, inflicting great grievances and destruction upon his faithful subjects there, who took no heed to consent to their malicious designs, and ceasing not daily so to do, insomuch that great part of the men of those parts have submitted to the said rebels, and the residue of the men of Wales and the marches are like to submit if the king resist not their malice.

Henry personally superintended the work of preparation for the advance into Wales. Apparently no steps were taken to surmount the chief difficulty of campaigning in Wales—the provisioning of the invading army: Henry again assumed that his men and their horses would be able to subsist on the country.

Early in October Henry led his men out of Worcester. His advance lay up the valley of the Severn, down the Wye to Builth, and then by way of Llanwrtyd Wells to Llandovery. He was in the last-named place on October 9. There he and his son, Henry of Monmouth, sat in judgment on a very gallant Welsh patriot, Llywelyn ap Gruffydd Fychan of Caio, whose social importance was emphasised by Adam Usk in the statement that he [Llywelyn]

yearly used sixteen tuns of wine in his household.

This estimable Welshman had come to Henry with an offer to guide his army to Owen's headquarters, the location of which he alleged he knew well because two of his sons were out with the rebels. But instead of carrying out the

promise, he led the English on a wild-geese chase through the hills, and then [perhaps a little unwisely] boasted that he had made a fool of the English king ! One is not greatly surprised, therefore, to learn that Llywelyn ap Gruffydd Fychan of Caio was

on the feast of Saint Denis at Llandovery, in the presence of the king and his eldest son, and by his command, drawn, hanged, beheaded and quartered.

It might be very satisfying to watch the biter being bitten ; but the execution of a Welsh gentleman brought Henry no nearer the subjugation of a disaffected countryside.

From Llandovery the English army marched over the hills into Cardiganshire, and moving up the valley of the Teifi took up headquarters at Ystrad-fflur or Strata Florida. Henry at once proceeded to vent his wrath on Welsh national feeling : he desecrated the famous Cistercian abbey of Strata Florida, where lay buried a score of the princes of Wales ; and he harried the surrounding districts so thoroughly that he

left them a desert, not even sparing children or churches.

Not once did he establish contact with the rebels who appear to have lurked in the hills between Ystrad-fflur and Rhaeadr ; but they harassed his flanks whenever opportunity offered itself ; and on one occasion they captured the entire baggage of Henry of Monmouth.

So back to England Henry marched his men, following much the same route as that along which he had advanced. He was in Shrewsbury on October 15 ; but he later returned to Shifnal, which became his headquarters for the remainder of the month.

For the moment Henry appeared to realise the gravity of the situation in Wales, and while he was at Shifnal he made some attempt to deal with it in a systematic way. Guy de Mona, Bishop of St David's, was commissioned to see that the defences of Brecon, Caermarthen, and Llandovery were put into a proper state of repair to meet

possible rebel attacks. Sir John Oldcastle and Sir Dafydd ap Llywelyn ab Hywel [who is better known as Sir Davy Gam] were ordered to defend the valley of the Wye north of Hereford. Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, received the important office of Lieutenant of South Wales.

Moreover, Henry again showed a desire to try measures of conciliation. Edward Charlton, who had recently succeeded his brother as Lord of Powys, was told that he could offer an unconditional pardon to all rebels who laid down their arms; and not only were the 'poor commons' of Cardiganshire pardoned, but Henry graciously allowed them to

use the Welsh tongue, although its destruction had been determined on.

And the royal generosity towards them resulted in Owen losing their support.

There is positive evidence that Owen himself in 1401 was willing to make his peace with the English king *on terms*. He had been in touch with Hotspur when he was Justiciar of North Wales; and they may have actually had an interview. There is no doubt that in later years Henry roundly charged Hotspur with disloyalty for not having captured Owen at that meeting! Even after Hotspur returned to the North Country there was correspondence between them; and it is thought that it was carried on with Henry's knowledge. The purport of the overtures was this: Owen expressed regret for the recent happenings in Wales [which he rightly said were not of his own making], and he was perfectly willing to return to his allegiance provided that he was left unmolested and his lands were returned to him.

Henry was back in London at the beginning of November; and shortly after his arrival in the capital he met his council. One of the matters which came before them related to the negotiations of Hotspur with Owen. Henry wanted to know how the council thought he ought to act. But opinion was hopelessly divided: one group



took the 'die-hard' attitude of making no concessions whatever to a rebel; another suggested that his terms might be accepted in order to get him into English hands, when he would be immediately put to death; and a third group, seeing the futility of wasting the country's strength in military operations in Wales, advocated the offer of an unconditional pardon with the restoration of Owen's lands. Since it was impossible to arrive at an unanimous decision—or even a majority decision—the matter was allowed to lie on the table. A real chance of an honourable settlement was thus lost.

Since there was no hope of reconciliation, it was imperative, from Owen's point of view, that his rebellion should be brought to a successful issue, and independence won for his native land. Towards the end of November 1401, therefore, he cast about him for allies. Letters were written to Robert III., King of Scotland, and an unnamed Irish chieftain, in which a request was made for armed assistance against Henry. These letters were intercepted by Henry's agents; but in the case of Scotland, Owen's cause suffered no serious hurt from that misfortune, because by some means or other the French court was persuaded to plead the rebel cause in the northern kingdom.

Diplomatic negotiations were immediately followed by action. During December, Owen came within an ace of taking the royal stronghold of Harlech; he harried the lands of the bishopric of Bangor, held by an Englishman; and in January 1402 he burnt Ruthin to the ground and drove off Grey's cattle. Not many days later, to the utter amazement of his enemies, he attacked Ruthin again; and by a clever ruse was able to take Grey a prisoner. March saw the rebels carrying fire and sword through the lands of John Trefor, Bishop of St Asaph; and in May and June the tale was repeated in the south-eastern districts of the principality.

It was in the middle of June that the English authority suffered its first serious set-back in Wales. Sir Edmund

Mortimer, uncle of the imprisoned Earl of March and the husband of Hotspur's sister, marched out from Ludlow with a strong force to give battle to Rhys Gethin, one of the ablest of Owen's captains. The two armies met at Pilleth, not far distant from Knighton; and in a terrible fight the Welshmen triumphed. Of greater importance even than the victory was the capture of Sir Edmund Mortimer, whose relationship to the *lawful* king made him a person of considerable importance.

Henry undoubtedly suspected, long before the fight at Pilleth, that Mortimer was not firm in his allegiance; but he had no proof that his suspicions were justified. On Mortimer's capture by Owen, however, the king immediately let it be known that he looked upon him as a not unwilling captive. Consequently he was not disposed to exert himself to secure his release by ransom; and the fact that he adopted the reverse attitude towards the question of Grey's release at once angered Hotspur, Mortimer's brother-in-law. There is every indication that Hotspur voiced a strong protest against Henry's behaviour towards Mortimer: in Hotspur's opinion the king's attitude merely demonstrated afresh royal indifference to Percy interests; and that thought hurt the Percy pride.

Henry was at once determined to avenge the disaster of Pilleth. In the middle of July he took up his headquarters at Lilleshall in Salop; and began to take stock of the situation. Edmund, Earl of Stafford, was put in charge of the border defences between Chepstow and Wigmore: a like duty fell upon the Earl of Arundel along the border from Wigmore to Holt. Stores and munitions were concentrated in Chester, Ludlow, and Hereford. The sheriffs were ordered to send contingents of 'fencibles' to Chester, Shrewsbury, and Hereford in readiness for a threefold advance against 'our rebels of Wales.'

At the end of August everything was ready for a start. The southern column, whose base was Hereford, was commanded by the Earls of Arundel, Stafford, and Warwick; the centre at Shrewsbury was under Henry's personal

command ; and the young Henry of Monmouth had charge of the northern column at Chester. News that the Scots were over the border, raiding the northern shires, caused a slight delay : troops were hastily detached from the three columns and dispatched to the North.

Henry had good cause to curse his luck on that march into Wales. It was the worst September within the memory of living men : the winds reached gale force ; torrential rain fell ; the Welsh rivers and streams were over their banks. On one occasion Henry came near to death by misadventure.

In the vigile of the Nativite of oure Lady, the Kyng had picchid his tent in a fayre pleyne ; there blew sodeynly so mech wynd, and so impetuous, with a gret reyn, that the Kyngis tent was felled, and a spere cast so violently, that, and the Kyng had not be armed, he had be ded of the strok.

It was not to be wondered that many in the royal army thought that these manifestations of bad luck were due to

nigromancy and . . . compellyng of spirites.

And soldiers behave badly when they are convinced that unseen forces are fighting against them.

In four lines Shakespeare told the story of Henry's three attempts to subdue Wales.

Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head  
Against my power ; thrice from the banks of Wye  
And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him  
Bootless home and weather-beaten back.

It was an achievement of which Owen might well be proud.

Once back on the border, Henry again tried to arrange for the pacification of the principality. Richard, Lord Grey, was appointed the king's lieutenant in Brecon, Caermarthen, Cardigan, Builth, and Aberystwyth ; and was given a force of 150 men-at-arms and 600 archers to serve under him. The king confirmed in their offices his son, Henry of Monmouth, Thomas Percy, Stafford, and

Arundel; and then left them to do what they could to uphold his authority in Wales.

Henry met the third parliament of his reign at Westminster on September 30, 1402. The disturbed state of Wales exercised the minds of the parliament-men, who with the customary omniscience of politicians attempted to accomplish by statute that which Henry had failed to achieve by arms; and they placed upon the statute book of the realm a number of anti-Welsh measures. No Welshman was to be allowed to bear arms; watch was to be set to prevent the transport of stores and munitions into Wales; the English castles in the principality were to be defended by Englishmen of proved loyalty and at the same time strangers to the districts in which the castles were situated; no Welshman was to hold administrative office in his native land. Aware that the real strength of the rebel cause lay in the influence which the bards had over their fellow-countrymen, the parliament-men declared it to be illegal for any 'wastrel, rhymer, minstrel, or vagabond' to make

commorthas or collections upon the common people.

And the crowning piece of this anti-Welsh legislation was that

no Englishman . . . that in time to come marrieth himself to any Welshwoman, be put in any office in Wales or in the Marches of the same.

About the middle of October the commons prayed Henry to open negotiations with Owen for the release of Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin. In all probability the petition was inspired by members of the royal household: they would know that Henry himself was most eager to secure the liberation of his bosom friend. Owen's terms were hard. Grey's ransom was fixed at 10,000 marks; and he was required solemnly to swear that he would never again bear arms against Owen. Henry's friend was freed; but the carrying out of the terms of release left him so

poverty-stricken that he could not hope to recover his lost fortunes during his lifetime.

Much to the annoyance of the Percies the fate of Sir Edmund Mortimer left Henry unmoved: nor did parliament show the same concern about him as they had about Grey. Henry's firm conviction that Mortimer was a traitor was strengthened when at the end of November news came that he had married Catherine, a daughter of Owen Glyn Dŵr; and in the middle of December the captive addressed a letter to his tenants in Maelienydd in which he informed them that he had joined his father-in-law with the intention of restoring Richard, if he lived, and if not, of placing his nephew, the Earl of March, on the throne. With justice Henry might say to Mortimer's friends: Did not I tell you that he was unfaithful in his allegiance to me?

It was in 1403 that Henry began to allow his son, Henry of Monmouth, to take a greater responsibility for the direction of affairs in Wales. In March, with the consent of the council, the king appointed him to be his 'Lieutenant in the Marches of Wales,' at the same time allowing him to maintain a permanent force for operations against the rebels; and in May the wisdom of this policy was seen in the daring raid which the prince led into the heart of Owen's country, when his men ravaged the estates at Glyndyfrdwy and Cynllaith Owen.

But the prince was hampered by lack of funds. On May 30 he put the matter plainly to his father in a letter which has come down to us: his men were clamouring for the payment of their wages, and were threatening to desert. He had done what he could:

. . . at present we have very great expenses and have made all the pawning we are able of our little jewels to defray them.

Apparently the young man knew his father's attitude on such matter, for he added a postscript:

And be pleased to be well advised that we have well and

fully shown you the peril which may happen whatsoever thing may come hereafter if remedy be not sent in time.

But Henry and his council turned a deaf ear to the appeal : the most they were prepared to do was to mobilise more men for service against the rebels ; and at the same time to leave the problem of the payment of the troops to solve itself !

From the English point of view matters went from bad to worse, and in the beginning of July, Henry and his son were being deluged with piteous appeals from royal officers in South Wales for immediate help to resist the rebels. The king's old friend, Richard Kyngeston, as Archdeacon of Hereford, wrote to emphasise the seriousness of the situation : another friend, Hugh Waterton, went post-haste to tell Henry that Owen and his men swarmed over the greater part of South Wales. The danger was momentarily averted by the defeat which Thomas, Lord Carew, and a force of Flemings from Pembroke inflicted upon Owen at St Clears [July 9].

But worse news was yet to come. Harry Hotspur was in open revolt and marching south to join forces with Owen in Wales. At Chester he had impudently boasted that he would make an end of ' Henry of Lancaster ' ; and thousands flocked to fight under his banners. The relationship of Henry and the Percies will be discussed in another chapter : here it is sufficient to say that once again good luck saved Henry from disaster. He brought Hotspur to battle outside Shrewsbury on July 22 before Owen came up ; and in a terrible engagement shattered the rebel force, leaving Hotspur dead on the field.

In Wales, Owen was unchecked. One moment his bands were harrying the border districts north of Shrewsbury, the next they were striking cold terror into the hearts of the people of southern Herefordshire and northern Gwent. On August 23 William Beauchamp, Lord of Bergavenny [Abergavenny], wrote a pathetic appeal for help to Henry : eleven days later faithful Richard Kyngeston not only gave his royal master a graphic account of the

rebel successes but openly hinted that the rebels were taunting the people that their king would not come to their aid!

For, my most dread Lord, you will find for certain that, if you do not come in your own person to await your rebels in Wales, you will not find a single gentleman that will stop in your said county [Hereford]. Wherefore, for God's sake, think on your best friend, God, and thank Him, as He hath deserved of you; and leave nought that you do not come for no man that may counsel you the contrary: for . . . this day the Welshmen suppose and trust that you shall not come there, and therefore, for God's love, make them false men.

On September 11 Henry arrived at Hereford: he was resolved to march into Wales, seek out the rebels, and crush them. Shipmasters in Bristol were commanded to run stores to the royal castles in South Wales; shire levies were mustered; and great preparations were made for the invasion. Within a week of his arrival at Hereford, Henry set out: he marched by way of Hay, Talgarth, Brecon, Defynnog, and on September 24 was encamped at Caermarthen. True to their policy of avoiding a pitched battle the rebels kept out of the way of the royal army; and Henry dared not follow them into the hills. He had taken stores with him on this expedition; but they were either inadequate to the needs of the men or for some reason or other the commissariat arrangements broke down; and once again he found himself in command of a starving army. The most he was able to do was to leave his bastard half-brother, John Beaufort, in charge of the town and castle of Caermarthen; and then he wearily ploughed his way back to Hereford, arriving there on October 3. No sooner was his back turned than the country was again swarming with rebel bands: poor John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, decided that he would not stay longer in Caermarthen 'for anything in the world!'

Back in Hereford bad news came to Henry: the con-

stable of Kidwelly castle wrote to inform him that the French had sent an armed force to assist the rebels. Fortunately, the Flemings of Pembroke drove the newcomers out of the district ; but the raiders merely transferred their activities to North Wales, taking part in an unsuccessful attack on the castle at Caernarvon. The Frenchmen did dreadful havoc in the districts of Lleyn and Eifionydd : they threw down the outer defences of Criccieth castle, and then went off to join in the siege of the grim fortress at Harlech, gallantly held by a mere handful of English and Welsh loyalists.

A gloomy view of the situation in Wales was taken by the parliament which assembled at Westminster on January 14, 1404. The parliament-men frankly expressed disappointment that the king had failed to pacify the country even though he had led four great expeditions into the rebel country. This dissatisfaction resulted in the appointment of Henry of Monmouth to the supreme command in Wales : his lieutenants were to be Edward Plantagenet, Duke of York, and Thomas fitzAlan, Earl of Arundel. But the prince's duties were left somewhat indefinite, and no money was voted specifically for the conduct of the war.

Early in the spring Owen summoned a 'parliament' to meet him at Machynlleth : the two main items of business were to sanction a Franco-Welsh alliance, and to hail Owen as lawful Prince of Wales. By June so serious had rebel activities become in the south-eastern Marches that Richard Kyngeston was again compelled to warn the king of the gravity of the situation ; and he concluded his letter with a pathetic appeal for a loyal subject, which reads uncommonly like a mild rebuke for royal indifference.

And for God His sake remember that honourable and valiant man, the Lord of Bergavenny, who is on the point of destruction if he be not rescued !

Henry of Monmouth lay at Worcester, powerless owing to lack of funds. On June 26 he wrote to his father,



asking him to remember his 'poor estate,' and warning him that he had not the means

of continuing here without the adoption of some measures for my maintenance, and that the expenses are unsupportable for me.

Writing to the council at the same time he issued a graver warning :

unless you make provision for us we shall be compelled to depart with disgrace and mischief, and the country will be utterly destroyed, which God forbid. And now since we have shown you the perils and mischiefs, for God His sake make your ordinance in time.

As though convinced that neither his father nor the council would hearken unto his words the prince repeated the warning a few days later.

Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was admittedly able to check the rebel activities in the south-eastern Marches by a victory at Campstone Hill, near Grosmont ; but he was not quick enough in following up his advantage ; and when he next engaged Owen at Craig-y-dorth, near Monmouth, the rebel leader had the better of a drawn battle. With truth Owen in 1404 might say that he was undisputed master of Wales : Harlech and Aberystwyth were in his hands, a formal treaty of alliance existed between him and the King of France, and a person of no less importance than John Trefor, Bishop of St Asaph, had now joined his cause.

In March of 1405, however, the rebels suffered a severe defeat. Rhys Gethin and a mighty army were completely routed by Henry of Monmouth at Grosmont : a few days later at Pwll Melyn, near Usk, the remnant of that force was hopelessly defeated by one of the prince's captains ; and not only was Tudur, Owen's brother, slain, but Gruffydd, his son, fell into the hands of the English. Within a week Gwent was clear of rebels. Perhaps with the idea of making a spectacular progress through the south Welsh

countryside, Henry planned another expedition ; and in May took up his headquarters at Worcester. There he learnt to appreciate the difficulties of trying to conduct a campaign on no funds. His council refused to listen to his harangues on his need for money ; the men threatened to march back to their homes unless they were paid ; and in exasperation Henry was compelled to pour out threats of the penalties which would be meted out to deserters. No sooner was he ready to start than news came that the North of England was seething with rebellion : there was nothing for it but to turn from Wales to meet the danger which threatened him from the side of the Percies and Scropes.

Bad luck has dogged the footsteps of few kings more persistently than those of Henry. He had hardly pacified the North when messengers from Wales brought him the news that nearly 3000 Frenchmen under Jean de Rieux, Marshal of France, had landed in Pembroke. On August 7, therefore, he issued writs to the sheriffs of eighteen inland shires to muster and send to Hereford

all knights, esquires, yeomen and other fencible men.

A fortnight later the king's army was face to face with a great Franco-Welsh force entrenched on Woodbury Hill, not ten miles from Worcester. Henry had not sufficient numbers to attempt to drive his enemies from their position : the French and Welsh apparently overestimated the English strength, and would not risk an engagement. After a few days they withdrew ; and Henry at once made preparations to follow them.

But the royal plan was changed. Henry learnt that a strong rebel force was besieging the castle of Coety in Morgannwg, held by Sir Laurence Berkerolles ; and he resolved to bring him relief. At the end of September the king relieved Coety ; but it was a Pyrrhic victory, for he could not bring the main body of the rebels to battle ; and as soon as he commenced his march back to the border rebel bands hung tenaciously on flanks and rear, doing much

damage to life and baggage. While the royal army made its way across the valley of the Rhondda, it was subjected to constant irritation from the attacks of Cadwgan-of-the-battle-axe, a gentleman of the locality, who combined rapidity of movement with successful guerilla tactics; and so demoralising did the Englishmen find the experience that they piously thanked God when their eyes fell upon the spires of Hereford's churches.

Five times had Henry personally led expeditions against Owen Glyn Dŵr: five times had he brought his men back to the border without having given them the chance of thrashing the hated Welshmen. After 1405, therefore, the king took no further personal part in the pacification of Wales: that stupendous task was left to his son, Henry of Monmouth, not probably at his father's instigation but out of deference to the wishes of parliament. There is no record of a clash between father and son over the conduct of affairs in Wales; but the suspicion remains that they held vastly different views about the best way of bringing peace to the principality; and the successes of the prince were in such marked contrast to the failures of his father that the majority of Englishmen were at once attracted to his side. It will presently be seen that a certain 'coolness' grew up between Henry and his eldest son; and one is naturally tempted to ask whether it did not originate in the popularity which Henry of Monmouth won by reason of his successful conduct of the war in Wales. It is not exaggerating the position to say that the prince had outstripped his father in warlike enterprise. Conscious of that fact, the flames of jealousy might have been fanned in the king's breast: alternately it might easily create a feeling of superiority in the prince.

Why did the Speaker [John Tiptot] on July 7, 1406, feel it a duty to address Henry 'seated on his royal throne' in the parliament chamber on the subject of the loyalty of Henry of Monmouth? The question is difficult to answer. But on April 3 the 'faithful commons' had

humbly prayed the king to convey the nation's thanks to Henry of Monmouth for the services which he had rendered against the Welsh rebels; and the extremely fulsome address of July 7 would at least appear to indicate that the 'faithful commons' through the mouth of their Speaker wished to smooth over some difference which had sprung up between the king and his son. John Tiptot stressed

the humility and obedience which he [Henry of Monmouth] bears towards our sovereign lord the king, his father, so that there can be no person, of any degree whatever, who entertains or shows more honour and reverence of humbleness and obedience to his father than he shows in his honourable person.

Speaker Tiptot thereupon went on to enumerate the golden opinions which Henry of Monmouth had won from his fellow-countrymen. His speech might be a charming tribute to the prince's public services; but it was also a reminder to the king that those services had been rendered in the principality, where he himself had been such a lamentable failure.

The rest of the tale of Owen Glyn Dŵr's rebellion is soon told. In the autumn of 1405 he was compelled to fight a number of engagements, in which the honours went to his enemies; and before the end of that year many of the Frenchmen who had come to his assistance left for their native land, having found Wales too poor a country to fight in. The value of the *Tripartite Indenture*, signed by Owen, Percy of Northumberland, and Sir Edmund Mortimer in the spring of 1406, was more apparent than real: three rebels against the crown of England might complacently divide up the realm between them, but it was another matter to make such a partition effective. Quietly and efficiently the young Henry of Monmouth and his captains were drawing men away from their allegiance to Owen's cause: conciliation was preferred to repression;

and grants of pardon were followed up by adequate military protection of the pardoned.

In 1407 a concerted attack was made on Aberystwyth: at one time it appeared as though Henry would command the royal forces in person—perhaps to impress upon his eldest son the fact that as king it was his privilege to act as commander-in-chief of the national army!—but succumbing to the ‘seasonal pestilence’ he had to stand aside. The siege of Aberystwyth proved to be a protracted business: it was almost in the power of the English when Owen swooped down and stiffened the defence; and it was not until the summer of 1408 that the English standards floated over its walls. Within six months Harlech was regained by Henry of Monmouth; and with it he secured possession of Owen’s wife, two daughters, and the two Mortimer grandchildren [their father, Sir Edmund Mortimer, died during the siege].

It was virtually the end of the rebellion. Owen Glyn Dŵr himself was never taken. He roamed throughout his native Wales, sometimes alone, at others accompanied by a handful of faithful friends. Odd skirmishes occurred until about 1410, but in none of them did the rebels gain so much as a slight advantage; and men who had been out with Owen for nearly ten years were eventually glad to avail themselves of the generous offers of pardon which Henry of Monmouth and his captains offered to all who came in and laid down their arms. Whatever hopes Owen may have entertained of an independent principality of Wales, ruled by Welshmen for the benefit of Welshmen, faded away; the power of the English overlord was restored, and sorely increased, to the detriment of Welsh traditions and life.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 'YOUR MATHATHIAS'

FOREMOST among the notables who came together to welcome Henry back to his native land in 1399 were Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and his eldest son, Henry called Harry Hotspur. Whether they recognised the exile as the saviour of his country from the reckless rule of a tyrant, or merely welcomed his return on the ground that it would afford them with opportunities of fighting, no man can say; but there is no doubt whatever that it was largely Percy support which ensured the ultimate triumph of Henry's cause, for the Earl and his son placed at his disposal a large force of men expert in war.

A proud race were these Percies. They lived arrogantly in semi-regal state on the Anglo-Scottish border: they were renowned for the magnificence of their establishments and the loyalty of their retainers. To them fell the task of maintaining the peace of the border: they performed it cheerfully, not because they were imbued with higher ideals of patriotism than their fellows, but because it was in their own interests to prevent the lawless depredations of raiding Scots. Not a few English kings had taken advantage of the fact that the Percy and the national interests were coincident. Why should the State spend money in defending the Anglo-Scottish border when a great family would do it gratuitously? And was it not an advantage to have them so occupied? The uncertainties of border life made it impossible for the Percies easily to use their power in order to disturb the national peace by challenging the authority of their sovereign.

When Henry landed at Ravenspur, Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, was a man of fifty-eight: Harry Hotspur was thirty-five. The father was famed for his handsome looks and martial bearing: the son, for a reckless daring in battle. Men never tired of telling of Hotspur's exploits at Otterbourne, a battle described by Froissart as

the best fought and severest of all the battles I have related in my history.

It is true that he had been captured by the Scots, but not before he had laid low some of the noblest in the Scottish army. Hotspur and Henry must have met frequently in boyhood days. They may have played boyish games together at Sheen and Kennington; and it was probably due to Henry's influence that Hotspur was admitted to the coveted Order of the Garter on the degradation of de Vere, Earl of Oxford and Duke of Ireland.

Northumberland could lay claim to a fine record of service. He was one of the early members of the Order of the Garter; he served Edward III. faithfully during the wars in France; and like so many of his ancestors he had undertaken the onerous duties attached to the office of Warden of the Scottish March. The grant of the earldom of Northumberland in 1377 was a fitting reward for loyal service to king and country, although it was actually secured through the personal influence of John of Gaunt; and, as Marshal of England, Henry Percy was numbered among the chief officers of the Crown.

His wife was Margaret, the daughter of Ralph, Lord Nevil of Raby, another powerful North Country magnate. It is said that she was a good wife and a gracious lady. The Earl was her second husband; her first being William, Lord Roos of Hamlake or Helmsley. But good wife though she was, and much as her husband loved her, she was unable [perhaps she was too wise ever to try] to break down his jealousy of her own family. As the Nevils were

favoured, so did that jealousy develop into an obsession : Northumberland saw in the Nevils a curb to his power in the North Country, and it was perhaps not unnatural that he should eventually look upon Henry's increasing confidence in Ralph Nevil, Earl of Westmorland, as proof of diminishing confidence in himself.

Marriage also complicated the relations of Hotspur and Henry. Hotspur's wife was Elizabeth, the daughter of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March : thus by marriage Hotspur was the uncle of the boy who, if succession to the throne had been governed by the common law of inheritance, was Richard's rightful heir. Furthermore, Hotspur was bound by strong ties of friendship to his brother-in-law, Sir Edmund Mortimer, whose part in the rebellion of Owen Glyn Dŵr has already been related ; and the fact that Henry persistently refused to believe that Mortimer was staunch in his allegiance merely aggravated the differences which had grown up between the king and the Percy family.

The Percies had two main grievances against Henry. They resented his personal interference in the affairs of the Anglo-Scottish border. They were aggrieved because the king refused to pay them in full for the services which they had rendered on his behalf. They were unable to forget that it was chiefly through Percy help that Henry had gained the throne ; and if they did not set high standards of gratitude in their dealings with others they looked for them in those who had dealings with the Percies.

In many ways Henry treated the Percies ungenerously ; but in fairness to him it must be admitted that he was always at his wits' end for money ; and it was not altogether unreasonable that he should expect his friends [and Northumberland and Hotspur were at pains to call themselves his friends] to make generous allowance for his position. It has been proved that no less than £41,750 of national funds went into the Percy pockets. This was a colossal sum, when allowance is made for the changed value of money ; and at first sight it might appear that the Percies were grasping noblemen, resolved to bleed the



Crown dry. On the other hand, constant service on the Anglo-Scottish border, together with Hotspur's service in Wales, must have imposed heavy financial burdens upon them; and doubtless the Earl and his son could argue that the money which they received from time to time from the king by no means recompensed them for the commitments which they had been compelled to make in the royal interests. Such an argument made little appeal to Henry: in his poverty-stricken condition he could not afford to allow it to do so.

An exaggerated sense of pride made it hard for Northumberland and Hotspur to conduct their case in a dignified and constitutional manner. Both were cursed with passionate tempers: both were singularly lacking in political wisdom: both held almost childishly to that article of the marcher creed which held that the sword was the best and proper arbiter in personal quarrels. There is little doubt that they underestimated Henry's strength of character and indomitable courage in the face of difficulties. They seem to have thought that a sudden appearance in arms was enough to 'bounce' the king into a complacent frame of mind wherein he would speedily recognise their claims; and when they found that Henry would not respond to such shameful treatment, they were too proud and too unwise to draw back, but blundered on to their own destruction. At the end of Northumberland's life the canker of bitterness ate deeply into his heart. He was aware that he had forfeited the friendship and confidence of the king. He saw the neighbouring Nevils growing in power and wealth. He was bereft of three fine sons, and the heir to the Percy lands was a young boy, the son of Hotspur, who was a fugitive in a strange land.

The withdrawal of Hotspur from North Wales in the summer of 1401 is a convenient beginning of the story of the dispute between Henry and the Percies. It will be recalled that Hotspur roundly told Henry that he felt that his services were not adequately appreciated: as proof

of that feeling he would doubtless have produced the evidence that Henry had made little effort to repay him the money which he had expended in fitting out forces for operations against the Welsh rebels. A year later Sir Edmund Mortimer's capture at Pilleth aggravated their differences, particularly when it was known that the king was resolved not to move in the matter of ransoming the prisoner. Matters came to a head after the Percy triumph over the Scots at Humbleton Hill on September 14, 1402.

The credit for that victory belonged to George Dunbar, Earl of March [Scottish peerage], who had renounced his allegiance to the King of Scotland and had settled in England. He advised Henry Percy and Hotspur to hold their hands when the mighty Scottish army advanced against them, rightly believing that the cool shooting of the archers would achieve far better results than the reckless hand-to-hand fighting which the Percies favoured. His advice was followed, and as a result the attacking Scots were completely routed. Few of the enemy were killed, but a host of prisoners fell into the hands of the Percies. Chief among them were the two leaders of the expedition, Archibald, Earl Douglas, and Sir Murdoch Stuart, Master of Fife and son of the Duke of Albany; the Earls of Angus, Moray, and Orkney; and the Lords Abernethy, Erskine, Montgomery, and Seton. From such a haul of prisoners the Percies had high hopes of rich ransoms; but to their dismay, not many days after the victory, an order from the council was received to the effect that none of the prisoners were to be ransomed without sanction. It is true that it was made perfectly clear that the captors were not to be deprived of their lawful rights; but that did not remove the suspicion that Henry himself meant to gain some pecuniary advantage from the Percy triumph.

Parliament met at Westminster on September 30, 1402. Northumberland must have shifted uncomfortably in his place as he listened to the customary opening sermon, preached by Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, from the

text: 'Great peace have they who love the law.' The preacher stressed the point that Henry was a divinely appointed instrument for the establishment of peace; and he went on to congratulate the king on the fact that God had shown him special grace in delivering the Scots into his hand. The assembly was solemnly warned that war would result unless the law was strictly obeyed; and, though Stafford did not say it in so many words, the allusion was to civil and not foreign war. It must have been obvious to Northumberland that Henry, through the mouth of the preacher, was warning the Percies that they must not allow success to turn their heads to the extent of opposition to the royal will in the matter of the prisoners taken at Humbledon Hill.

But the Percy stock was at its highest level in that fourth parliament of Henry's reign. The gallant way in which they had held the border against the hated Scots was in marked contrast to the pusillanimous efforts of the king in Wales; and on October 16 the commons boldly prayed Henry to make a public recognition of the services which the Earl of Northumberland had rendered to his country by his magnificent victory at Humbledon Hill. Henry granted the commons' petition, but with a bad grace. On October 20 Northumberland presented to the king, in the presence of parliament, the prisoners taken at Humbledon Hill. There was a murmur in the assembly when it was seen that Douglas was not among them: rumour had already put about the story that Hotspur would never surrender his noble prisoner to the king, but would ransom him how and when he thought fit.

Was it the injured dignity of a man who saw a subordinate honoured at his expense, or part of a deliberate policy, which caused the king to have another 'hit' at Northumberland in that parliament? The parliament-men, greatly perturbed at the heavy burden of taxation, ventured to ask what had become of the money which Richard was known to possess at the time of his capture. Henry replied that it had gone to Northumberland; but

the commons apparently doubted the accuracy of the royal explanation, and suggested that the matter ought to be fully inquired into. Henry saved his face by refusing to grant their request.

Hotspur's defiance of the royal command to send the Scottish prisoners to London was a challenge which Henry could not ignore. Hotspur received another summons to send Douglas to London, but he evaded it by saying that he himself would come south to make an explanation. When he appeared without Douglas, the king harangued him for his contumacy ; but Hotspur retaliated by raising the question of the ransoming of Mortimer. Why was it that Henry should assist Grey of Ruthin to secure his release and yet leave Mortimer to his fate ? The king's reply was so hopelessly inconsistent that it merely increased Hotspur's anger : he did not intend to supply Owen Glyn Dŵr with money which he would immediately use to continue his resistance to the English power !

*Hotspur* : Shalle a man spende his good, and put him selfe in perille for you and your reme, and ye wil not helpe him in his need ?

*Henry* : Thou art a traitour ! wilt thou that I sholde socoure myn enemies, and the enemies of the reme ?

*Hotspur* : Traitor am I none, but a trew man, and as a trew man I speke.

It is said that Henry drew his dagger ; but Hotspur quickly informed him that he would not be slow in accepting his challenge, remarking :

Not here, but in the feld.

Henry had made an implacable enemy.

There are indications that Henry sincerely wished to compose the quarrel with Hotspur. Early in March 1403 he granted the greater part of the English conquests in southern Scotland to Northumberland and his heirs for ever ; and Hotspur at once set off to establish Percy power in the newly-acquired lands. On March 9 the king appointed

a commission to deal with disputes which had arisen between Percy and Nevil partisans over the partitioning of the spoils of Humbledon Hill: this was a disinterested move on Henry's part, and one which both Northumberland and Westmorland welcomed.

But the lands in southern Scotland which Henry bestowed upon the Percies were the cause of another difficulty. The inhabitants naturally resented an arrangement which compelled them to become the subjects of an alien king. They were loyal subjects of the King of Scotland, and they had no desire to change their allegiance. On the other hand, they had every reason for hating the Percies, whose men had frequently harried their lands in the past. At Cocklaw James Gladstone so gallantly defended his home that he was able to make the customary mediæval arrangement whereby he undertook to surrender unless he was relieved by the Scottish king before August 1, 1403. A similar arrangement was made by the garrison of Ormiston in Teviotdale.

Towards the end of May the Percies learnt that great preparations were on foot in Scotland to rescue Cocklaw and Ormiston some time in July; and it was reported that the Scots would be actively supported by Welsh rebels and French allies. Northumberland lost no time in communicating this intelligence to Henry and the council; and urged that they should send him funds adequate to meet the danger before June 24. Henry somewhat ungraciously replied to the effect that the Percies were making too much of the danger: in his opinion they themselves had sufficient forces to meet the emergency when it arose, but there would be sent to them with as little delay as possible 'a certain sum of money.' When the appointed day came and the promise was not fulfilled, Northumberland again wrote to Henry. He was at considerable pains, and displayed not the slightest trace of resentment, in emphasising the seriousness of the situation in the North; and reminded Henry that more than £20,000 was due to his family for their services, notwithstanding

the fact that people falsely reported that they had already received £60,000 of national funds. Northumberland concluded with a protestation of loyalty, and signed himself 'Your Mathathias.'

Henry found it impossible to turn a deaf ear to an appeal so humbly and amicably made; and he gave out that he would march northwards

*pour y donner aide et confort a nos treschs et foialx cousins  
le Conte de Northumberland et Henry son filz.*

But, strangely enough, Northumberland was considerably put out by the king's decision. He attempted to persuade Henry that it was quite unnecessary for him to make the journey to the North, but when the king persisted that he was resolved to help 'his very dear cousins' to meet the threatened danger from Scotland, Northumberland had no alternative but to agree to the royal plan.

How far Henry suspected the Percies it is difficult to say; but it was certainly a staggering blow when news came to him at Lichfield about July 13 to the effect that the Percies were in open revolt, and that Hotspur was already at Chester actively engaged in recruiting an army to march against 'Henry of Lancaster.' His uncle, Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, who was the guardian of Henry of Monmouth, slipped quietly away from the prince's headquarters at Shrewsbury and joined the rebels: he

wrote to divers nobles of the kingdom as well as to the people of the land . . . asserting that the plan . . . was not contrary to the allegiance or fealty which they had sworn to the King, and that they were not collecting an army for any other purposes than to secure the enjoyment of personal safety, the reform of public administration, and the appointment of wise councillors for the welfare of the King and the realm.

But there was more behind the revolt than that. A widespread movement in the North, hostile to Henry, was bent

upon a change of dynasty ; and it acquired respectability when such men as Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, and Walter Skirlaw, the Prince-Bishop of Durham, openly gave it their blessing. Some, believing that Richard was alive in Scotland, clamoured for his restoration ; others, knowing that Richard was dead, advocated the replacing of Henry by the young Earl of March.

From Lichfield Henry moved back to Burton-on-Trent. For a moment he thought that it would be wiser to return to London ; but George Dunbar, Earl of March, strongly urged him to strike before the rebels had time to consolidate their forces. On July 16, therefore, writs were despatched to the sheriffs of eleven counties, ordering them to muster the ' fencibles ' and to bring them to him ' wherever he might be ' ; and on the following day Henry wrote to the council in London, asking them to join him in the field. The king's appeal for help was responded to with alacrity by the Londoners and the men of the Home Counties, and within twenty-four hours strongly armed bands were marching westward.

Hotspur and the rebels went from Chester to Lichfield. There he issued his famous proclamation, justifying the action which he had taken. To his sorrow he had played a prominent part in placing Henry of Lancaster on the throne ; but at last he had realised his mistake ; and he was ready to make amends by dispossessing him of the Crown which he had wrongly seized and bestowing it upon its rightful owner, Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. Was not this action a just retribution of providence for the wrongs which Henry of Lancaster had done since his return to the country ? At Doncaster, at the High Altar in the parish church, he had sworn solemnly on the Holy Gospels that he would not harm Richard or deprive him of his Crown. He had promised no less solemnly that the church and people should not be overborne by heavy taxation ; and at his coronation had undertaken to maintain the laws inviolate.

But what had happened ? Not only had Richard lost

his crown, but at Henry's orders he had been most foully done to death in Pontefract Castle. There had been not a decrease but an increase in taxation; and instead of defending the laws Henry himself had violated them in the most flagrant manner by compelling the sheriffs only to return to parliament representatives known to favour the king's views. Finally, Henry had repeatedly refused to ransom Sir Edmund Mortimer, and had kept the Earl of March from the enjoyment of his lawful heritage.

Disaffected subjects in the North Country rushed to join the army which Northumberland was mustering to march south to help his son and brother. But Westmorland was loyal: hastily collecting a strong force he posted it across Northumberland's line of march, and compelled the rebels to remain in the North Country. What arrangements Hotspur and Worcester had made with Owen Glyn Dŵr it is hard to say; but there is no doubt that they expected help from the side of the Welsh.

If Hotspur was a fearless fighter, he was a poor strategist. Although he commanded the approaches to Shrewsbury, he allowed Henry to slip into the town with a force numerically inferior to his own; and then he made no attempt to stand between the king and the reinforcements which he must have known would come from London and the Midlands. Instead, the rebel force withdrew northwards about three miles. These movements took place on July 19 and 20.

Mediaeval chroniclers are seldom to be relied upon on the subject of strengths of armies. The number of the rebels varies from 26,000 to 14,000 men-at-arms and archers: that of Henry's army from 60,000 to 30,000. In all probability the Percies had with them about 15,000 men-at-arms and archers; and as a result of the arrival of reinforcements Henry could count upon the services of, say, 20,000 men-at-arms and archers. The armies faced each other in the open country near the village of Berwick; and it was rumoured that the actual engagement would take place on July 23. Once again it was George Dunbar,



the Scottish Earl of March, who bestirred Henry to action : in his view it was in Henry's best interests to fight at once, before the Welsh joined the Percies.

Accordingly, on the morning of July 21, the king sent Thomas Prestbury, Abbot of Shrewsbury, to parley with Hotspur. The envoy's message was simple : let the rebels disperse and Hotspur put himself in Henry's mercy, so that the blood of innocent men should not be spilt ; and the king would not deal ungenerously with them.

Herri [Hotspur] was sumwhat meved with this message, and sent to the king his unkil, Thomas Percy.

The accounts of the interview which took place between Henry and Worcester are confused ; but there is little doubt that the offer of pardon was repeated. But Worcester taunted the king with faithlessness and incompetence, and in an atmosphere of mutual hatred they parted. Capgrave's account, if written years after the incident, rings true. Henry asked why the rebels came in arms against him.

*Worcester* : We broughte the yn ayens king Richard, and now thou rewlist worse than dede he. Thou spoilist yeerly the reme with taxes and tallages, thou paest no man, thou holdist no hous, thou art not the heir of the reme. . . .

*Henry* : I take tallages for nedis of the reme, and I am chosen kyng be comune assent of the reme, wherfor I counsel the to put the in my grace.

*Worcester* : I trust not thi grace.

*Henry* : Now I pray God that thou most ansuer for alle the blood that here shalle be shed this day and not I.

So Worcester withdrew from the royal presence and joined his friends.

The order for battle to commence was given. Henry's men raised the shout : *St George ! St George !* The rebels retorted with : *Esperance Persie ! Esperance Persie !* In the uncut corn and vetches, in the great field between the two armies, they came to grips. The Cheshire archers

poured volley after volley of arrows into the advancing loyalist host: the king's archers retaliated. Now one side appeared to have the advantage, now the other. Early in the fighting died Edmund Stafford, Earl of Stafford, the commander of the loyalist centre. An arrow wounded Henry of Monmouth in the face; but he would not leave the field. One thought dominated Hotspur's mind: he would cut his way through the enemy ranks and with his own hand slay the king. Around him were thirty of his bravest knights, among them being the Scot, Archibald, Earl Douglas. With their swords they made great lanes in the loyalist host; but the king's men stood firm; and back the thirty were driven. For 'three long houres' the battle raged. Then Henry staked everything on one final thrust. Rallying his men with the shout: *St George Victorie! St George Victorie!* they flew at their enemies. In that desperate attack Hotspur was cut down, 'and no man wist of whom,' just at the moment when there were signs that the loyalists were weakening. The rebels shouted: *Henry Percy King! Henry Percy King!* Henry countered with: *Henry Percy Dead! Henry Percy Dead!* His men took up the shout. It sent a cold blast of fear through the ranks of the rebel army: they wavered for a moment, hoping that Hotspur's magnificent figure would give the lie to that boast. When they could not see their leader, they broke and ran.

The wyrste batayle that ever came to Inglelonde and unkyndest

was over: it was a great personal triumph for Henry.

More than 1600 dead were thrown into a great trench for burial: some years later Henry raised over them a splendid memorial, the present Battlefield Church. The wounded, said to number 3000, lay about him in heaps or hobbled back to their homes. Douglas, Worcester, Richard Venables [Lord Kinderton], Sir Richard Vernon, and many others were taken prisoners; and they were sent back to Shrewsbury to await their fate. When Henry gazed upon

Hotspur he wept. Before him lay a friend of boyhood days : their friendship had been most tragically ended by the sword. Strong men keep secret their regrets. Did Henry, as he looked upon the dead body of his friend, recall that some of the blame for their recent differences was attached to himself ?

But Henry was never a slave to sentimentality. Although he had allowed John Talbot, Lord Furnival, to bear Hotspur's corpse away to Whitchurch for burial, the king had no scruples about having the body dug up and brought in a countryman's cart to Shrewsbury. There it was salted and placed between two millstones near the pillory, for all the world to see how the king dealt with traitors. Douglas became Henry's prisoner ; but Worcester, Kinderton, and Richard Vernon were summarily executed. Their heads were joyously carried back to London by the Londoners, and were placed on London Bridge. Before Henry left Shrewsbury for the North he ordered his servants to strike off Hotspur's head and to quarter the body. The head was sent to York with orders that it should be placed on the city's northern gate. There the hideous, eyeless skull looked out towards the Percy country, a terrible reminder of the wrong which that country had done to the king. The four quarters were divided between London, Bristol, Chester, and Newcastle.

Henry lost no time in dealing with the revolted Northumberland. The day after the victory at Shrewsbury he sent a messenger northwards to tell Westmorland to seize Northumberland, and to bring him alive or dead into the royal presence. Two days later the king himself moved out of Shrewsbury with a great army ; and on August 4 he took up his headquarters at Pontefract. At first it looked as though the rebel earl would put up a spirited resistance ; but the news that his son was dead broke his spirit ; and he retired from Tadcaster back to his estates. Royal troops went after him. His attempt to shut himself up within the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne was frustrated

by the townsmen, who refused him admittance: they told him plainly that he himself and his personal attendants would be given sanctuary within the walls, but they were not going to incur the wrath of the king by admitting the rebel army. Northumberland had no alternative but to accept these conditions; but when his men tried to force their way into the town and were beaten off he felt that their action might be construed as an abuse of hospitality; and fearing lest the townsmen might hand him over to the king he decided to withdraw to his castle at Warkworth. But the opposition was broken: his men went off to their homes, and the earl was left to await his fate at Henry's hands.

He must have been surprised when he received from Henry a letter in which he was told that bygones would be bygones if he submitted to the king at York. His optimism, however, quickly vanished when the two met, as Henry meant them to meet, beneath the grisly head of Hotspur. Northumberland's reception was cold and unfriendly; and Henry lost no time in telling him that he must clear himself before parliament and that in the meantime he would be kept in confinement. In vain the earl asked for pardon: nor did he make any impression upon his former friend when he tried to clear himself by laying the blame upon the recklessness of his dead son. Royal officers were appointed to take over the command of a number of Northumberland's castles: the office of Constable of England, which he had held since Henry's accession, was bestowed upon Prince John the king's third son, who with Westmorland was henceforth to share the wardenships of the Scottish March. When Northumberland had consented to all these arrangements, he was sent under a strong guard to Baginton, near Coventry, where he lay in prison until he was brought before parliament.

At Baginton his case was carefully inquired into; and on February 6, 1404, he was brought before parliament. In a humble petition he admitted his fault, and begged the king to pardon him. Henry asked the lords for their

verdict : they declared that since Northumberland was not guilty of treason he should only be punished by fine for the part which he had taken in the rebellion. Falling on his knees he thanked the king for such a generous sentence ; and begged to be allowed to take again the oath of allegiance. In the presence of the assembled parliament the earl swore faithfully to serve Henry and his heirs ; and immediately Henry ordered him to be liberated and excused him the fine. The scene ended with a solemn protestation by the earl : if ever he offended again [which God forbid] he would ask no forgiveness but would take the consequences. Some days later Northumberland and Westmorland were reconciled in Henry's presence ; and with their kisses of peace there appeared to be every prospect of good fellowship and peace among their tenantry in the North Country.

But Northumberland could not forget that Henry was the cause of the death of his favourite son, Hotspur, and of the advancement of the hated Nevils. Back in his castle of Warkworth the old man allowed bitterness and resentment slowly to erase the memory of his obligations to his king—obligations solemnly stated not many months before in the presence of lords and commons. Native cunning made him appreciate the need for caution : not for a moment must Henry think that his ' Mathathias ' was resolved to oust him from the throne.

Northumberland did not attend the meeting of the council at Westminster in January 1405. To the royal summons he replied that he was too old and unwell to undertake the journey to London in the heart of winter ; and protesting his undying loyalty and friendship he trusted that Henry would accept his excuse. In March, however, Northumberland was in his place at the council table : the king greeted him affectionately. But no sooner was he back at Warkworth than he received envoys from Owen Glyn Dŵr, John Trefor, Bishop of St Asaph, and Lewis Byford, Owen's Bishop of Bangor. There is every indica-

tion that Northumberland had been in communication with Owen for some considerable time: now the Welsh leader asked his friend to come to his aid. His most capable captain, Rhys Gethin, had been defeated at Grosmont and Usk: the victory had so heartened the English that they were planning a 'push' into the heart of Wales. A diversion in the North would relieve the pressure; and concerted action from both sides might easily result in the overthrow of Henry.

When Northumberland was summoned to attend a meeting of the council on April 19, he took no notice of the royal writ: he deemed the time ripe for another attempt to rid the kingdom of the usurper. Sir Robert Waterton went north at Henry's command to warn the earl of the danger which he ran; but he threw the messenger into prison [May 6], and dashed off to surprise Westmorland, who chanced to be staying at Witton Castle. Westmorland, however, managed to escape: he hastened to his estates and prepared to counter Northumberland's treasonable intentions.

A prominent supporter of Northumberland's party was Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York. He had taken a leading part in the proceedings against Richard and from the outset had supported Henry's claim to the throne. It is difficult to understand why Scrope abandoned Henry's cause: even in the rebellion of Hotspur his sympathies had been with the rebels rather than with the king, though he had been careful not to compromise himself too seriously. He was certainly a good man in the sense that his private life was blameless—a great achievement for the holder of high ecclesiastical office in that age; but he had few of the qualities of saintliness which are manifested in the true saints of the mediæval Church.

Archbishop Scrope was present at the meeting of the council on April 19 [the meeting which Northumberland refused to attend]: with Thomas, Lord Bardolph of Wormegay, he had voiced a strong protest against the burden of taxation; but Henry must have regarded this

as merely the criticism of the government by two powerful subjects, for had he suspected them of disloyalty he would surely have taken steps to prevent them leaving London. As soon as the council was adjourned and Henry on his way westwards to deal with the Welsh rebels, Scrope, Bardolph, and Nottingham went north to join Northumberland.

Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, was the son of Henry's old adversary, the Duke of Norfolk. His father had died in poverty in Venice in 1399, and he was thereupon allowed to succeed to the earldom of Nottingham: the title of Duke of Norfolk was abolished, and although the Mowbrays claimed to be hereditary Marshals of England that office had been granted to Westmorland, the young Thomas Mowbray being permitted, it is true, to style himself Earl Marshal. He was married to Henry's niece, Constance Holland; and was high in the royal favour. But as he grew up [he was only fourteen in 1399] he naturally smarted under the loss of the office of Marshal; and his sense of grievance was accentuated in March 1405 when Henry rejected his claim in a suit for determining his order of precedence among the baronage. He was thus easily persuaded to join in the rebellion against Henry.

As soon as the three reached the North they found that a large number of people were out with Northumberland. The news that Archbishop Scrope had thrown in his lot with the old earl immediately brought crowds into the rebel camps. The character of the movement was changed: if a prince of the Church like Scrope felt it his duty to array himself against Henry, what right has the gentry and commons to hold back?

It was Scrope who drew up and published the 'articles' or grievances of the rebels; and had them

set on the gatis of the cite [York] and sent to curatis of the tovnes aboute, forto be prechid openli.

These 'articles' were cunningly drafted.

These are the articles, and the defects which A. B. C. and G., with the assent of the common people, wish to have amended, that Parliament should be held at London, and all the estates to enjoy their liberties in the free election of the knights of the shire.

These are the articles of amendment and reform for the hindrance of adversity and disaster, which shall indeed come upon the realm on account of the lack of justice, unless it shall please God, of His Mercy, to help the estates of the realm.

First. On account of the bad government of the realm, relief according to truth and justice, and reform, must be had for the intolerable burdens borne by all estates of the clergy, and the injuries and losses inflicted upon all estates, both spiritual and temporal, for the safety and liberty of Holy Church, which always before this has been governed and dealt with in such a manner as to be well-pleasing to God.

Item, remedy must be found for the poverty and low estate into which the lords have fallen, to the prejudice of their own persons, as of their heirs, contrary to the condition of their birth, and of the laws and customs made by their ancestors. Item, remedy must be found for the excessive and intolerable taxes and subsidies, extortions and oppressions, from which the gentry, merchants, and commons of the realm are suffering, to the eventual impoverishment and destruction of those who indeed ought to be the support of all the estates, spiritual and temporal, if they are well governed as they ought to be ; and uncontrolled extravagance must be punished, that is to say expenses incurred for the personal advantage of individuals and paid for them from the great sums received from the afore-said gentry, merchants and commons, and their goods must be restored, for the safety of the realm and the bettering of the estate of the faithful commons.

The unnamed A. B. C. and G. protested that they had no wish to sow the seeds of discord in the realm: their one aim was peace ; and if these reforms could only be accomplished, then an end would be made of the rebellion in Wales



. . . we have the word and full promise of those who are now rebelling in Wales, that they will assent joyfully to the rule of the king of England.

But the drafters of the manifesto were careful not to disclose the name of ' the king of England ! '

Two points in these ' articles ' are to be noticed. First, baronial and ecclesiastical interests predominate ; second, the treachery of the rebel leaders is clearly revealed. The ' poverty and low estate ' of the lords was a matter which weighed heavily with men like Northumberland and Nottingham. They would have preferred to find themselves in the position where they could dominate Henry's government in such a way as to obtain benefits for themselves and discomfiture of their personal enemies. This grievance is a high tribute to the efficiency of Henry's rule : in the face of almost insuperable difficulties he had been able to check the lawless activities of selfish barons.

Archbishop Scrope was doubtless troubled about the way in which Henry had allowed certain of the parliament-men to vent their wrath against the Church by propounding a scheme of disendowment in the Coventry parliament [October 6 to November 14, 1404] : in desperate need of money the king might at any time accept a scheme of secularisation of ecclesiastical funds. As a good churchman it was Scrope's bounden duty to condemn such impiety. The sin of sacrilege was a deadly sin—the more deadly when it touched the pockets of ecclesiastics who saw virtue in simony and nepotism !

The common good is always a useful cloak for treasonable undertakings. But it was not the reform of the administration, it was bitterness and resentment, which drove Northumberland to take up arms against the king. It was a slight on the Mowbray honour which sent Nottingham north to join the rebels. It was the fear that Henry might be persuaded to initiate reforms in the Church which arrayed Scrope with Northumberland and Bardolph. On their own admission the rebel leaders were in treasonable communication with Owen Glyndŵr, when as loyal

Englishmen it was their duty to march with their king against him. The real aim of the rebellion was carefully concealed. They meant to oust Henry from the throne, not because after five years their consciences troubled them about the way by which he had come to the throne, but because their candidate for the throne was a young boy, whose youth would make him dependent upon their favours and services.

A thoroughly unscrupulous man was Ralph Nevil, Earl of Westmorland; but he was loyal to Henry—perhaps for no better reason than that his neighbour, Northumberland, was disloyal! After getting away from Witton before the Percy men surprised the place, Westmorland gathered together a force, and, joining up with Prince John in Berwick, marched south to meet the rebels. By skilful manœuvring he posted his force at Shipton Moor, some six miles north-west of York; and thus stood between the two rebel forces—the one commanded by Northumberland and the other by Scrope. A detachment of Westmorland's men fell upon and routed at Topcliffe, to the north-east of Ripon, the rebel contingents from the North Riding: they fled helter-skelter to their homes.

The numerical superiority of the 'priestly rout,' which Scrope and Nottingham had with them at York, was discounted by the strategic advantage of Westmorland's position. On May 26 the rebels marched to Shipton Moor; and for three days the two forces faced each other 'with banners spread.' Afraid to risk a battle and anxious to gain time until Henry himself arrived with reinforcements, Westmorland decided to parley. A message was sent to the rebel leaders asking why they came in arms to disturb the king's peace. The archbishop replied that

he tooke nothing in hand against the king's peace, but that whatsoever he did, tended rather to aduance the peace and quiet of the common-wealth, than otherwise . . . he and his companie were in armes . . . for feare of the king, to whom

he could haue no free accesse, by reason of such a multitude of flatterers as were about him.

With the messenger Scrope sent a copy of the 'articles,' so that Westmorland might understand the rebels' grievances. What good fortune would be theirs if the earl could be persuaded to see the reasonableness of their demands and join the revolt!

Westmorland's part in subsequent events may be thoroughly discreditable, but he had his back against the wall, and his sovereign's life depended upon his ability to hold the rebels in check.

When he had read the articles, he shewed in word and countenance outwardly that he liked of the archbishops holie and vertuous intent and purpose, promising that he and his would prosecute the same in assisting the archbishop.

There was great rejoicing in the rebel lines when they heard of Westmorland's 'conversion.' Scrope readily agreed to his adversary's suggestion that they should meet half-way between the two forces to discuss matters; and much against his will Nottingham was persuaded to go with him. They were attended by Sir William Lamplugh of Cumberland, Sir Robert Percy of Ryton, and Sir William Plumpton, Scrope's nephew. Westmorland took to the meeting Prince John and Sir Ralph Ewere of Witton. The articles were discussed;

and without anie more adoo, the erle of Westmerland and those that were with him agreed to doo their best, to see that a reformation might be had, according to the same.

Could there have been a happier issue to the business!  
Said Westmorland,

vsing more policie then the rest: "Well [said he] then our trauell is come to the wished end: and where our people haue beene long in armour, let them depart home to their woonted trades and occupacions: in the meantime let vs drinke together in signe of agreement, that the people on

both sides maie see it, and know that it is true, that we be light at a point."

They shook hands, kissed, and drank together. A knight was thereupon sent to the rebel lines with the message :

"tharchebishoppe comaundeth every man forto go hoom agayne, for he shall this night sowpe with the earlle."

The poor husbandmen, persuaded by their priests that they were engaged in a righteous undertaking, were only too glad to find an excuse for returning to their homes : at the sight of their leaders drinking amicably with Westmorland they broke ranks and went off. Then Westmorland threw aside the mask of friendship and arrested Scrope, Nottingham, and their friends.

Such is the accepted story of Westmorland's 'subteltie.' It has been said that Scrope and his friends actually laid down their arms on being promised their lives ; but not before the two forces had come into collision. Be this as it may, Scrope and Nottingham were in Westmorland's hands ; and without any more ado he sent them as prisoners to Pontefract to await the arrival of Henry who was on his way north from the Welsh border. Then, with Prince John, Westmorland marched back to Durham to keep an eye on the movements of Northumberland and Bardolph.

On June 3 Henry arrived at Pontefract. He was met by the archbishop before whom was carried the crozier. Henry's bastard half-brother, Sir Thomas Beaufort, snatched the cross out of the hands of the attendant priest, saying at the same time that a traitor had no right to take refuge behind his archiepiscopal cross. In a rage Scrope himself seized the cross, declaring that no man could deprive him of that which the pope had granted him ; and in the unseemly scuffle which ensued the archbishop was roughly handled. Abjectly Scrope begged Henry's pardon ; but the king would not listen, and ordered the archbishop

to be removed from his presence. He sent trusted servants ahead to York to inform the inhabitants that he would slay them all, and throw down their homes, unless they submitted ; and on June 4 a commission was set up to try the rebels. Orders were sent to Westmorland and Prince John to seize all the lands of Northumberland and to deal with the rebels as they thought fit.

When the king took up his headquarters at the archiepiscopal palace of Bishopthorpe on June 6 the citizens of York waited upon him.

barefoot and ungirt, with haltris aboute thair neckis, and fel doun before the kyng axyng mercy and grace, because they aroos with tharchebisshoppe.

Henry sent them home in an agony of suspense : he had not yet decided what punishment he would mete out to them, and they must await his pleasure.

Guards brought Scrope and Nottingham to Bishopthorpe : the commission which Henry had set up was reconstituted in readiness to try the ringleaders. There is no doubt that it had already been resolved that they must die ; and the news that Scrope's sacred office would not save him from the executioner's axe brought Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury, north. Having ridden all through the night he burst into Henry's bedchamber before the king was up : he was Henry's best friend and it was his duty to save him from the obloquy of having sent a prince of the Church to his death.

*Canterbury* : Sire, I am your ghostly fader and the secunde persone of the reme, and ye sholde accept no mannes counsel souner than myn, yf it be good : I counsel you that if tharchebisshoppe of Yorke haue trespass so moche ayens you as it is said, reserue him to the popis jugement, and he will so ordeyne that ye shal be plesid ; and if ye wille not so, I counsel let him be reserued to the jugement of the parlement, and kepe your handis vndefoulid from his blood.

*Henry* : I may not for rumour of the peple.

Henry's answer to the pleading of the Archbishop of Canterbury was provoked by the obvious disapproval of those of his household who were present at the interview. They clamoured for the death of the rebel leaders without exception : Henry could not show signs of weakness without risking the loss of their confidence.

It is difficult to believe that Henry himself was much concerned about putting a high ecclesiastic to death. He was not a religious man. Scrope had stirred up the people against him ; he had been taken in arms ; and for that crime alone he was guilty of treason, the penalty for which was death. But how was Henry to proceed ? When he commanded Chief Justice William Gascoigne to pass sentence of death upon Scrope, Nottingham and their friends, the judge bravely replied that, while he was willing to deal with a man like Sir William Plumpton, it was contrary to the law of the land for the king or any of his subjects to sentence a bishop of the Church to death, and Nottingham had the right of trial by his peers. With that observation Gascoigne left his place on the bench and went out of the room.

For a moment Henry and those of his followers who wanted the extreme penalty for all the rebel ringleaders were nonplussed by the Chief Justice's decision. Sir William Fulthorpe, however, took Gascoigne's place as president of the court : he was a soldier who had some knowledge of the law ; and being supported by Arundel, Sir Thomas Beaufort, and Sir Ralph Ewere, he signified his willingness to do Henry's behests. Scrope, Nottingham, and Sir William Plumpton were brought before them : in a few moments Fulthorpe had sentenced them to death.

Riding on ' an ill-favoured jade ' Archbishop Scrope was taken to the place of execution outside the walls of York. With him were Nottingham and Sir William Plumpton. When the former showed signs of breaking down under the strain, Scrope cheered him with the reminder that they were soon to enter into an unspeakable bliss. In a field of

barley belonging to the nuns of Clementhorpe the executioner's block was set up : a great crowd of silent people morbidly watched the grim proceedings. Nottingham and Sir William Plumpton were quickly dispatched : the archbishop on his knees at the side of the block prayed for the safety of their souls.

And whenne the archebisshoppe sholde die, he saide,  
 " Lo ! I shalle die for the lawes and good rewle of Engeland."

Turning to the executioner, one Thomas Alman of Poppleton, who was serving a sentence in a York prison, the condemned man asked him to strike five times.

" For His loue that suffrid v woundes for alle mankynde."

Then he kissed Alman, and after a brief prayer paid the penalty for his treason. If Richard Scrope had not known how to behave as a faithful subject, he knew how to die like a man ; and it is not surprising that

the common people tooke it he died a martyr.

And the tale went round that from the moment of Scrope's death Henry was afflicted with the foul disease of leprosy.

The execution of an archbishop was a matter which the pope could not allow to pass without strong protest. Not only was the papal curse laid upon all who had consented to the death of Scrope, but strict injunctions were sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury to make the ban of Holy Church effective. This Thomas fitzAlan refused to do. It was probably at his advice that Henry sent a letter of explanation to the pope, though he may not have agreed to its contents or the accompanying relic of Scrope's treason.

Thenne sente the king to the Pope . . . the habergeon that tharchebisshoppe was armed ynnē with these wordis :  
 " Pater, vide si tunica hec sit filij tui an non." [Father, see if this is thy son's tunic or not.] And the Pope ansuerde agayn in this wise, as it was said : " Sive hec sit tunica filij mei an

non, scio quia fera pessima devoravit filium meum." [Whether this is my son's tunic or not, I know that a most evil beast has devoured my son.]

The way in which the papal conscience was quietened is indicative of the condition of Holy Church at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

And so be prive menes of money the mater was cesid.

Having dealt with the citizens of York, Henry led a great host northwards to seek out and destroy Northumberland. Stopping for the night at Green Hammerton, he had a terrifying experience. Soon after he had retired for the night his attendants heard him screaming :

Traitors ! ye have thrown fire over me.

They rushed in and found the king exhausted as a result of his dream. He was given a draught of physic ; but so ill was he that next day he was only able to make the journey to Ripon with difficulty ; and there he was compelled to remain for the following week. Tongues wagged : it was the dread leprosy, having taken hold of Henry in his nose ! Men who gazed upon him during his stay at Ripon were appalled by his terrible appearance : great pustules stood out on his face.<sup>1</sup>

Few men have borne sickness with greater fortitude than Henry. As soon as he was well enough to travel he pushed forward into the heart of the Percy country. On June 19 his army entered Durham : two days later he was at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where the townsmen gave him an enthusiastic reception. One by one the Percy strongholds were taken, and on June 27 he was within striking distance of Warkworth. Northumberland and Bardolph were at Berwick ; but the castellan of Warkworth served Northumberland faithfully to the end, and it was only when the

<sup>1</sup> The question of the disease which Henry contracted will be discussed later. See pages 279-280.



'gonnes' battered down the walls that he surrendered the castle into the king's hands.

The game was up. Nothing could withstand the onward march of the royal army; and when Northumberland learnt that Henry was resolved to attack Berwick he made final arrangements to take refuge in Scotland with an old friend, Sir David Fleming, in whose keeping was Hotspur's son. On July 12, Berwick Castle yielded after the 'gonnes' had hurled half a dozen rounds against the walls: two days later Alnwick capitulated 'without assault.' Henry's work in the north was done: he could return southwards to deal with the pacification of Wales. Before leaving, however, he made arrangements for dealing with the disaffected districts in the north; and he honoured Westmorland's house at Raby with his presence for three days (July 20-22).

Knights like Sir John Colvil-of-the-Dale, Sir John Fauconberg, Sir John fitzRandolph, and Sir Ralph Hastings of Slingsby, prominently identified with Northumberland's and Scrope's treason, were put to death; but in the main the subjugation of the North Country was carried through with little bloodshed. Pardons were secured after payment of fines. Estates were confiscated and given to men whose loyalty had saved the day for Henry. The power of Northumberland was ruthlessly and effectively broken.

But as long as Northumberland was alive, Henry's peace would be troubled by his plottings. With Bardolph and a handful of faithful followers [including the emissaries from Wales], the old earl enjoyed the hospitality of the Scots. He kept up a treasonable correspondence with Owen Glyn Dŵr and the French Court, anticipating that both would help him to regain his patrimony and overthrow Henry.

Cunning as an old fox: such was the verdict of contemporaries on Northumberland. But Henry played him at his own game and beat him. Scotland was an unnatural

sanctuary for a Percy: many a Scot had old scores to settle with the earl, whose men had harried the border district for years. A palace intrigue played into Henry's hands. A strong party in Scotland plotted to place Archibald, Earl Douglas, on the throne as soon as it was vacated by the enfeebled Robert III. The English king, therefore, let it be known in Scotland that he would favourably consider an exchange of prisoners, Archibald Douglas and Murdoch Stuart for Northumberland and Bardolph.

Northumberland's friend, Sir David Fleming, got wind of the plan, and warned the old earl that Scotland was no longer a safe sanctuary for him. Early in February 1406 the fugitives set sail for Wales, where they were welcomed by Owen Glyn Dŵr and Sir Edmund Mortimer. In the manor house of Dafydd Daron in Aberdaron, Owen, Northumberland, and Mortimer drew up and sealed the famous *Tripartite Indenture*, whereby they impudently arranged to parcel out among themselves England and Wales. Owen was to receive in full sovereignty his native Wales: Northumberland was to rule in the northern, and Mortimer in the southern, halves of England. And at the same time the three of them swore to wage a relentless war against Henry.

Some time in the summer of 1406 Northumberland and Bardolph left Wales for Brittany. They went straight on to Paris, where they endeavoured to interest the French court in their cause: Northumberland even went to the extent of promising to become Charles VI.'s 'man.' But no matter how sympathetically they were received they could not secure what they most needed—armed help for an attack on England. From Paris they journeyed to Flanders; and from there returned to Scotland in the spring of 1407.

Between the earl and his partisans in England there were continual comings and goings. Sir John Skelton of Armathwaite and Sir Thomas Rokeby, Sheriff of Yorkshire, let him believe that Cumberland and Yorkshire would take up

arms on his behalf ; in many of the old Percy castles there was disaffection among the men of the garrisons ; and the Welsh said that they would march to his aid. So in the belief that the hour of revenge had struck, Northumberland entered upon his last rebellion, in January 1408.

No man living remembered such a winter : from Christmas to Lady Day the countryside lay under a pall of snow. So bitter was the weather that for many years to come men spoke of that winter as the ' great frost and ice.' In the Middle Ages war seldom was waged in winter-time ; but Northumberland, probably in the hope that his defiance of convention would win him success, set out for the Percy country. Men came in to serve him, but not in any great number : they had not forgotten the ill-luck which had attended the previous rebellion. At Thirsk the earl issued a proclamation : he had returned to free the land from a hated oppressor and to recover his own. Then with the object of joining up with the friends which Sir Thomas Rokeby said were to be found in the West Riding Northumberland marched south ; but to his utter amazement he found that Rokeby was in arms against him, and with a strong force held the ford over the Nidd at Grimbaldsbridge, near Knaresborough. The earl turned east and crossed the river lower down ; and after passing through Wetherby [February 18] he took up his position on some rising ground on Bramham Moor.

Rokeby hung on to the rebels' advance, and no sooner were they in position on Bramham Moor than he hurled his little force upon them. The battle was short and decisive : within an hour and a half Rokeby held the field [February 19, 1408]. Northumberland lay dead in the snow : Bardolph was so severely wounded that he died the same night : Lewis Byford, John, Abbot of Halesowen, and the Prior of Hexham were prisoners. Northumberland's head was severed from his body and sent to London : it was escorted through the city by a jeering crowd to London Bridge, where it remained for many months. The quarters of his body, carefully ' parboiled in a pickle of cloves, cumin,

and anise,' went to Berwick, Lincoln, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and York. Bardolph's head was set up in Lincoln: his quarters, in London, King's Lynn, Shrewsbury, and York.

As soon as he heard that the earl was in arms against him Henry went north. He ordered the execution of John, Abbot of Halesowen, on the ground that he had borne arms; but Lewis Byford and the Prior of Hexham were pardoned, after undergoing short terms of imprisonment. Rokeby was rewarded for his loyal services with the Percy manors of Spofforth, Linton, and Leathley; and after setting up the customary commission to accept the submission of rebels Henry left the district [April 30]. The Percy peril was past: the only heir to the great traditions of that family was a boy, and far away in Scotland.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE POWER OF THE KEYS

THE support of the orthodox party in the Church was a powerful factor in Henry's usurpation of the throne. From the outset orthodox churchmen espoused his cause ; and when he had snatched the sceptre from Richard's grasp, Holy Church gave him her blessing. Henry must have known that he would be required to pay for that support. He had been brought up in a home in which a generous protection was given to those ' lewd persons ' who dared to challenge the authority and teaching of Holy Church ; and some of his dearest friends [for example, Thomas Erpyng-ham and Peter Buckton, to name only two] were strangely drawn to the new teaching. Henry himself was not a man of strong religious convictions. Outwardly he professed religion according to strictly orthodox standards : inwardly he was indifferent to the nicer points of theology, probably preferring to judge goodness from manner of life than from strictness in observances of ritual.

A pillar of orthodoxy was Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury : he was also Henry's closest friend. It was the archbishop's aim to root out and destroy all who dared to hurl the barbs of heresy against the sacred edifice of the Church's teaching ; and being a born administrator he naturally took a pride in attempting to bring order out of chaos in the spiritual life of the nation. In his view the attack on heretical opinions was long overdue. During the latter half of the fourteenth century heresy had been allowed to stalk unashamed throughout the land, thanks largely to the support which it had received from a man of

the political power of John of Gaunt. Heresy had acquired force from the scholarly presentation by John Wiclif: it had been propagated throughout the land by scores of popular preachers.

The spiritual life of England was more disturbed by the latter than by scholarship of Wiclif. Simple parish priests taught their parishioners to cherish Christian goodness, and to despise the worldliness of great clerics and the utter selfishness of lay gentry. Their message came not from a study of the 'new thoelogy' of Wiclif, but from an intimate knowledge of the lives of their people and the state of the world in which they lived. Wiclif put these opinions into philosophical form, and expanded them into a new theology. He argued that *dominion*, whether in Church or State, was founded only in grace; and then proceeded to show that all who did not live in grace were not entitled to exercise dominion either in ecclesiastical office or secular jurisdiction. Wiclif believed sincerely that overmuch wealth had throttled the spiritual life out of the Church; and reflected that in the early Church the ideal was apostolic poverty. His teaching that all men held their possessions directly from God by the same tenure of service brought him face to face with the fact of the communism of the early Christian communities; and led him to attack the whole structure of ecclesiastical administration.

Wiclif's masterly use of logical argument may have produced an attractive theology, but its adoption would have resulted in the complete disintegration of mediæval society. To aver that a priest not living in grace was without *dominion* was one thing: the other was how to decide whether he was living in grace or not; and if every Tom, Dick, and Harry was to become the judge of priestly behaviour the result would inevitably be spiritual chaos. Similarly, in the sphere of secular affairs, Wiclif's teaching was pregnant with dangerous possibilities, since it emphasised the need for an adjustment of social relationships. The frenzied preachings of John Wrawe and John Ball were capable of rousing the hatred of the people against their

masters, but they did not provide them with the means to achieve their ends, and in the absence of leadership the people were ground between the upper and nether millstones of a mediæval conception of law and order.

A John Ball might be in every respect a righteous man, but it was expecting too much of human nature to ask great cleric and layman to appreciate the truth of his message :

Good people, things will never go well in England till goods are in common, and there are neither villeins here nor gentlefolks.

Men still listen reverently to the Sermon on the Mount, or the account of the common sharing of goods among the little band of converts in Jerusalem shortly after Christ's Ascension, read to them in the services of the Church ; but many still go home and count their money bags or readjust their investments. And so it was in mediæval England : piety was preached and practised, but villeins were bound to the soil, and great churchmen batted on rich livings, without much thought of *rightness* or *wrongness*.

This is not meant to show that Wiclif and his followers were essentially wrong in their practices : it is a plea for a more tolerant understanding of the problem. Within the Church there were sincere men who clung tenaciously to orthodoxy and yet were conscious of the need for reform. They were distressed at the immorality of certain of the clergy and the worldliness of their lives ; but they believed that these abuses could be removed without the introduction of a new theology or a new political theory. To these men much of Wiclif's teaching was anathema because, in their view, it was un-Scriptural : indeed the later Protestant claim of a rigid interpretation of Holy Scripture was in this period the basis of the orthodox attack on Wiclifite opinions. A man like Thomas fitzAlan waged a ceaseless war against the Wiclifites or Lollards not because he took a fiendish delight in sending opponents to death or brutal

punishment, but because he was convinced that their teaching was harmful to the spiritual welfare of good Christian people, and he would have supported his point of view by what were then thought to be unanswerable arguments from Holy Scripture and the writings of the Fathers. Nor could he be expected to share the Wiclifite view on ecclesiastical endowments and private property. Despite the fulminations of popular preachers against private property, Holy Church had sanctified the arrangement for a thousand years; and whatever might be said about apostolic poverty there was also good authority for the endowment of religious foundations. The archbishop himself was a member of the propertied classes, and he therefore had a vested interest in what he undoubtedly thought was morally right. In other words, Thomas fitzAlan was a typical product of his age: John Wiclif and his followers were living two centuries before their time.

Henry profited by his father's experience. Attractive as the Wiclifite teaching might be, it still only appealed to a minority in the State; and it would have been suicidal for Henry to have allied himself with a party of such political insignificance. On coming to England in 1399 he knew that he would have troubles enough without repeating his father's mistake of patronising the Wiclifites: it was far more important to win over to his side the immense power of the Church; and it was not difficult to do so since he was a firm friend of Archbishop fitzAlan. Once on the throne, but still faced with the task of consolidating his rule, the king never tried to check the attack upon the heretics: by that time there was abundant proof that they were a subversive element in society; and it must have been a great relief to Henry to find that the Church was so assiduous in her efforts to break their power. It relieved him of an unpleasant and costly task.

Archbishop fitzAlan opened the attack on the Lollards without delay. On the second day of the reign [October 1,



1399] the sheriffs and mayors in the kingdom were directed by royal writ to forbid the popular support of

certain evil-disposed preachers, holding diverse nefarious opinions and detestable conclusions, repugnant to the canonical decisions and sanctions of Holy Mother Church.

And yet, though Henry must have known better than any one the archbishop's views, he accepted Sir John Cheyney as the commons' choice of Speaker, apparently without demur. It was Archbishop fitzAlan who effected the change of Speakers. Henry was quite content to have Cheyney, though he must have known that this man was a notorious sympathiser with the Lollards. This in itself is proof of Henry's indifference in matters of religion?

The attack was developed in the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, which met in Paul's Church on January 29, 1401, concurrently with Henry's second parliament. In opening the meeting Archbishop fitzAlan said that 'the great object' was to exterminate the Lollards; and after a lengthy discussion a petition was framed in which the clergy complained to Henry that their powers of dealing with heretics were not full enough, and they prayed that this defect might be remedied by statute.

Petitions did not become statutes until the conclusion of the parliamentary session. Archbishop fitzAlan was in a dilemma: on February 12, 1401, a certain William Sawtre or Chatrys, described as a 'chaplain of London,' was brought before Convocation to answer for his unorthodox preachings. [Incidentally he had been previously charged before the Bishop of Norwich, but had publicly recanted at King's Lynn, swearing solemnly never to repeat his heresy.] Sawtre or Chatrys was charged with eight specific 'dangerous propositions,' the most dangerous of which was his contention that after consecration in the Mass the bread remained bread. He was provided with a copy of the indictment and allowed five days to study it. When he again appeared before Convocation on February 18, he gave more or less satisfactory answers to

seven of the charges, but to the eighth [on the subject of transubstantiation] he persisted in his heresy, and although he was allowed a full day in which to ponder his answer, he remained obstinate. Archbishop fitzAlan, thereupon, pronounced him guilty of heresy, and he was sent away to await punishment. On February 26, the archbishop and six bishops degraded Sawtre or Chatrys before a large congregation in Paul's Church. Adam Usk, who probably was present in Convocation, records that the condemned chaplain made a spirited outburst at the time of his condemnation :

Sir William Sawtre . . . with great heat spake to my lord of Canterbury with these words : " I, sent by God, declare to thee that thou and all thy clergy and the king also shall die anon an evil death ; and the tongue of a strange people shall hold sway in the land. And this evil standeth waiting even in the gates."

Such words were hardly likely to induce clemency.

Archbishop fitzAlan's dilemma was this : with the public degrading of the heretic priest the Church's jurisdiction was ended. He therefore sought Henry's aid in the form of a writ authorising the burning of Sawtre or Chatrys. That writ was dated February 26, but was not issued until March 2, and in its final form contained the words

by the king and council in parliament.

Sawtre or Chatrys was burnt to death at Smithfield on that day,

chained standing to a post in a barrel, packed round with blazing faggots.

Orthodoxy had won a terrible victory.

Henry has often been blamed for his part in the burning of Sawtre or Chatrys. His writ has been characterised as unconstitutional, a flagrant usurpation of a parliamentary

right, namely, the right to create a new capital offence. But there is evidence to show that the matter was urgent : London was a stronghold of Lollardy, and report had it that many of the sect were hastening to the city, obviously with the purpose of creating a disturbance. Moreover, Henry did not act on his own initiative : he certainly discussed the matter with the chief men of the kingdom, who approved his action ; and he may also have sounded the commons. When parliament met for the last time in that session [March 10, 1401] a formal statute was announced—the famous statute *de Haeretico Comburendo* ; and the only observation which the commons had to offer was that it ought not to be enforced until after the coming Whitsuntide to enable the people of the land to acquaint themselves with its contents. This statute granted far-reaching powers to the bishops : (1) they could fine or imprison for heresy ; (2) they could demand the surrender of heretical writings within forty days on pain of fine or imprisonment ; and (3) all who persisted in their heresy were to be handed over to the sheriffs or mayors for punishment by burning in a public place.

‘The burning death’ chilled heretic hearts. On March 5 or 6 orthodoxy registered another important victory : a public recantation was made by a parish priest of Lincolnshire, John Purvey, described quaintly as ‘the library of the Lollards and the glosser of Wycliffe,’ in consequence of his friendship with Wiclif and his work on the Wiclifian translation of the Bible. Some followed Purvey’s example : many were careful to conceal their heresy in secret meetings.

One section of the Church Henry could not placate. Richard had been the friend and protector of the friars ; and after his deposition they worked openly to undermine Henry’s authority in the realm. In country cottage and village alehouse Dominicans and Franciscans in particular told dark tales about a mysterious fugitive in Scotland : they said he was none other than their lawful king,

Richard, and one day he would return to claim his own.

The people listened attentively to these tales. They had gained nothing from the change of government: on the contrary, their lot was more grievous than it had been for many years. So, as a chronicler noted, they

began to grucche ayens kyng Harri, and beer hym hevy, because he took thair good and paide not therfore; and desirid to haue ayeen king Richarde.

Such was the position in 1402.

Henry tried to check the treasonable activities of the friars. He threatened to withhold endowments to the friaries; and informed the heads of the Orders that unless they could keep their members in better control he would proceed against them without respect for their holy calling. And he was as good as his word. In the early summer Walter of Baldock, who had once been a Prior of Austin Canons in Leicestershire, was executed for having been involved in some treasonable plot. Some weeks later eight Franciscans were captured in the same county, having openly incited the people to go out with them to meet King Richard. When they were brought to justice in London, two juries refused to convict them: they were thereupon tried by a jury in 'Yseldon' [Islington] and sentenced to death.

One of these Franciscans strenuously defended himself and his friends: he was Roger Frisby, a Master of Divinity of Oxford and Warden of the Franciscan friary at Leicester.

*Henry*: Thise bith lewde men [referring to his companions], and not vnderstandyng; thou sholdist be a wise man, saist thou that king Richard livith?

*Frisby*: I say not that he livith, but I say yf he live, he is veray king of Engelonde.

*Henry*: He resigned.

*Frisby*: He resigned ayens his wil in prison, the whiche is nought in the lawe.

*Henry* : He resigned with his good wille.

*Frisby* : He wolde not haue resigned yf he hadde be at his fredoum ; and a resignacioun maad in prison is not fre.

*Henry* : He was deposid.

*Frisby* : Whanne he was kyng he was take be force, and put into prisoun, and spoyled of his reme, and ye haue vsurpid the croune.

*Henry* : I haue not vsurpid the croune, but I was chosen therto be eleccioun.

*Frisby* : The eleccion is noughte, livyng the trewe and lawful possessour ; and yf he be ded, he is ded be you, and yf he be ded be you, ye haue loste alle the righte and title that ye mighte haue to the croune.

*Henry* : Be myn hed thou shalt lese thyne hed.

*Frisby* : Ye loued nevir the chirche, but alwey desclaundrid it er ye were kyng, and now ye shall destroye it.

*Henry* : Thou liest.

They took the gallant Master away, and shortly afterwards he was executed. At the gallows in Tyburn he preached 'a deuout sermon,' in which he forgave Henry for ordering his death.

The same chronicler records the interview between Henry and a Franciscan of Aylesbury, which reveals the same fine spirit of loyalty.

*Henry* : Thou hast herd that king Richard is alive, and art glad therof.

*Friar* : I am glad as a man is glad of the lif of his frende, for I am holden to him, and alle my kyn, for he was our furtherar and promoter.

*Henry* : Thou hast noised and told openli that he livithe, and so hast excitid and stirid the peple ayens me.

*Friar* : Nay.

*Henry* : Telle me trouthe as it is in thi herte ; yf thou sawest king Richard and me in a feld fighting togedir, with whom woldest thou holde ?

*Friar* : Forsoth, with him, for I am more beholde to him.

*Henry* : Thou woldest that I and alle the lordis of my reme were ded ?

*Friar* : Nay.

*Henry* : What woldest thou do with me yf thou haddist the victory ouyr me ?

*Friar* : I wolde make you duke of Lancastre.

*Henry* : Thou art not my frend, and therfor thou shalt lese thin hed.

It is not to be wondered at that a knight of Henry's household [and one almost suspects that the words came from the lips of Erpyngham or Oldcastle] observed to the king :

We shall nevir cece this clamour of kyng Richard til these freris be destroid.

That knight 'loued nevir the chirche,' observed the chronicler.

In 1404 the monks of certain Essex monasteries were involved in a somewhat obscure conspiracy against Henry. The abbots of St John's monastery in Colchester, St Osythe and Byleigh were convinced that Richard lived ; and the tale went round [the abbots themselves saw to it that it had proper publicity] that he was to be restored to his throne with the help of the French and the Welsh. It was through John Staunton, a servant of the Countess of Oxford, who was heart and soul in the conspiracy, that the government learnt of the disaffection in Essex ; and once the information was in their hands they acted quickly. Some of the ringleaders were apprehended ; others escaped. The monks of Essex showed far less resolution and courage in their treason than the friars.

Wiclif had advocated the disendowment of the Church because he was convinced that riches militated against a healthy spiritual life in the clergy. The idea appealed to laymen who wished to save their pockets at the Church's expense. Henry's continual calls for money made ecclesiastical disendowment an attractive political possibility : laymen knew that the Church was fabulously rich, and it suited their convenience to forget the extent of ecclesiastical contributions to the national purse. In any case a section

in the community was prepared to test Henry's feelings on the matter of ecclesiastical disendowment.

There is no doubt that a definitely anti-Church atmosphere pervaded Coventry during the meeting in that town of Henry's fifth parliament [October 6 to November 14, 1404]. In the writs summoning the parliament-men the sheriffs were commanded to ensure that none was returned

that had any skille in the lawes ;

and as a result the Coventry parliament was called the 'leymens' or 'illiterate' parliament. Capgrave has a story which emphasises the religious indifference of the people in Coventry.

In the same Parlement, the archbishop, as he went in the strete, happed to mete the prest beryng the Sacrament to a seke man ; for there was grete pestilens in the town at that tyme. The archbishop and othir many ded reverens to the Sacrament, as it was hir deute. Many of the puple in the strete tirnd her bakkes, and aualed not her hodes, ne ded no maner reverens. This was told onto the Kyng, and he ded in this mater dew correccion, for many of hem were of his hous.

Some records suggest that the Speaker was the notorious Sir John Cheyney ; but this has been disputed, a Devonshire gentleman, Sir William Sturmy, being named in that office. The tone of the proceedings certainly suggest that a man with Sir John Cheyney's opinions was at the back of the commons' open attack on the clergy.

Henry lost no time in telling the assembly that he needed money immediately to carry on the work of government. The commons were urged to give the granting of money precedence over all other business ; but they were not impressed by the urgency of the royal need ; and even ventured to express surprise that Henry was unable to follow the example of his predecessors and 'live on his own.' Then came the bombshell : if Henry needed money so desperately for the defence of the realm, why should not the Church supply it out of her temporalities ?

Capgrave fathers that suggestion on to Sir John Cheyney, and records the rebuke which he received from Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Now se I weel whidir thi malice walkith. Thou renegade and apostata of thyn Ordyr, woldist put the Cherche al undirfote. But whil this hed stant on this body, thou schal nevyr have thi entent. Remember the wel that at eviry task, the Cherch have payed as mech as the lay fe. And alle your bisnesse is for to gadere to made your selve rich. But know this for a treuth,—that lond schal nevir endure in prosperite that despiseth Holy Church.

Henry calmed the infuriated Primate. The Church would not suffer any hurt at his hands. fitzAlan drove his victory home with a scathing speech to the assembled parliament-men :

Ye have stered the Kyng to enchete alle the temporaltes that longyng to the Frensch monkis in al the lond; and though the vawew of hem com to many thousandis, the Kyng is not amendid thereby half a mark be yere : For ye amongst you have it, and dispende it youre plesauns. And moreovyr I sey you, myn hed schal rather bowe onto the swerd, than Holy Cherch schuld lese ony part of hir rite.

But the archbishop and his episcopal colleagues had seen the message in the writing on the wall : the nation looked to them to give liberally to the national revenues.

There was no protest when a Great Council in February 1408 authorised an act of ecclesiastical disendowment. It was laid down that Henry should receive the income from the hundred and forty odd alien priories in England and Wales in order to meet the expenses of the royal household. Archbishop fitzAlan probably justified his acquiescence in this piece of secularisation on the ground that the parent houses had recognised the schismatic pope at Avignon !

Confiscation of clerical property was too attractive a proposition to be dropped by the anti-Church party. In the ninth parliament of Henry's reign [January 27 to March 9,



1410] a scheme of disendowment was tabled, and presented to Henry in a petition of the commons. The version in Holinshed is probably correct in substance :

To the most excellent lord our k. and to all the nobles in this present parlement assembled, your faithfull commons do humblie signifie, that our soueraigne lord the king might haue of the temporall possessions, lands & reuenues which are lewdlie spent, consumed and wasted by the bishops, abbats, and priors within this realme, so much in value as would suffice to find and susteine one hundred and fiftie earles, one thousand and fiue hundred knights, six thousand and two hundred esquiers, and one hundred hospitals more than now be.

The petition went farther than that : it attempted to show that in addition to the above advantages the king would receive an income of more than £20,000 a year ; and that the Church would still be able to fulfil her spiritual duties. Another petition from the commons begged Henry to modify the statute *de Haeretico Comburendo*, or even revoke it. But the shadow of death was already drawing towards the king, and the orthodox party had by that time gained a powerful supporter in the young Prince Henry of Monmouth. So the faithful commons, who had presumed to put forward these petitions, were politely informed that it was not their business to meddle in such matters. It is significant, however, that Archbishop fitzAlan was able to persuade the clergy of the southern province to vote three-tenths instead of the customary one-tenth : under no consideration must these enemies of Holy Church be allowed to accuse her of niggardliness in supplying the national need.

In one quarter Archbishop fitzAlan met with unflinching opposition to his drive against the Lollards. John Wiclif had been a distinguished member of the University of Oxford, and had numerous supporters there. In October 1406 the University officially placed on record an appreciation of Wiclif's thought and work, taking care to observe that the

object of their veneration had never been convicted of 'heretical pravity.' Dr James Gairdner in his *Lollardy and the Reformation in England* suggests that the appreciation was 'a protest against a growing ecclesiastical feeling that Wycliffe's teaching, however honest, was answerable for much disorder.' Be this as it may, Oxford was again the champion of a lost cause: in the interest of order within the Church, Archbishop fitzAlan was not prepared to allow even so august an institution as the University of Oxford to retain any great measure of intellectual independence. With his customary courage he carried the war into the enemy camp by ordering the members of the Convocation of the province of Canterbury to assemble in St Frideswide's Priory in Oxford on November 1407; and with subtle skill he piloted through that meeting thirteen 'constitutions' which were to be binding upon the clergy.

These 'constitutions' struck hard at Lollardy. Open-air services, speculation on the Sacraments, and translation of Holy Scripture were forbidden unless expressly sanctioned by episcopal authority. No Wiclifite publication was to be allowed in any educational institution until it had been 'censored' by twelve doctors and masters appointed by each of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge; and the heads of all colleges and halls were required monthly to see that all under their authority observed these 'constitutions.'

For a year the Archbishop's 'constitutions' were not enforced; but in the Convocation which met in January 1409 they were formally promulgated, and shortly afterwards were sent to every diocese in the kingdom for publication. But at Oxford they were given a hostile reception. Many of the dons resented the Archbishop's interference on the ground that he was only a simple Bachelor of Arts, and they adopted obstructionist tactics by refusing to serve as 'censors' of the Wiclifite writings. Even when 'censors' were appointed it was exceedingly difficult to secure unanimity on the question of the 'errors' in Wiclif's works; and when they tried to do their work, they found that it 'carried

no sort of weight.' At the head of the opposition was the Yorkshireman, Master Richard Fleming : he was supported by John Luke of Merton Hall, John Kerby, Rowland Bevyys, and Robert Burton ; and they were able to win over to their side a considerable number of sympathisers.

The Archbishop's anger was aroused : he would go to Oxford and teach the recalcitrant Masters and Bachelors that he was not to be disobeyed. The Chancellor of the University, the brilliant young Richard Courtenay, had no intention of allowing any one to interfere with what he considered to be the prerogatives of the University. Taking his stand on a papal bull of 1395, that the University in spiritual matters was subject only to the Papacy, he refused Archbishop fitzAlan admittance to the Church of St Mary. The latter retaliated by placing the building under an interdict. Two Fellows of Oriel, however, broke into the church and said Mass in bold defiance of the interdict ; and to make matters worse the Dean of Oriel contemptuously said :

Devil take the Archbishop and break his neck !

Feeling ran high : there was even talk of deciding the matter with an appeal to force. For the moment the Archbishop was beaten. He retired from Oxford to lay his complaint before the king ; and no sooner was his retinue out of sight than the ' censors ' appointed under his ' constitutions ' were sent about their business, even in defiance to Chancellor Courtenay's wishes.

On September 9, 1411, the Chancellor and the Proctors [John Birch and Benet Brent] appeared before Henry at Lambeth to answer the charges which Archbishop fitzAlan had brought against the University. There is little doubt that from the outset the king's judgment of the case was prejudiced ; it was a matter of common knowledge that his son, Henry of Monmouth, and Bishop Henry Beaufort [both of whom were then in open revolt against the royal policy generally] were in sympathy with the Oxford authorities. So it is not surprising to find that Henry gave Chan-

cellor Courtenay and the two Proctors a cold welcome, saying that he was greatly disturbed by the reports which he had received from Oxford, and rebuking them for not dealing with the disorders more promptly and firmly.

A week later the royal verdict was announced : in the interval, however, Henry of Monmouth had seen his father to put in a special plea on behalf of the University, but the subsequent sentence hardly supports the often made claim that but for the prince's intervention matters would have gone badly with the University authorities. Henry stated emphatically that Archbishop fitzAlan had complete jurisdiction over Oxford, and promised that any defiance of his authority would incur a fine of £1000. Chancellor Courtenay and the two Proctors were dismissed from their offices ; and a number of scholars were flogged. In due course deputies of Archbishop fitzAlan went to the Church of St Mary to receive the public submission of the University ; and within a year the condemnation of the Wiclifite writings had been secured. Again the Archbishop had triumphed.

In the middle of this quarrel with the authorities of the University of Oxford another heretic was sent to the stake. His name was John Badby, who apparently was a shearer of Evesham. The old tale was told against him : he had denied transubstantiation and the sacerdotal power of the priesthood ; and on these counts he had been condemned of ' heretical pravity ' [the usual form of the charge] by Thomas Peverel, Bishop of Worcester, on January 2, 1409. Given the customary year's grace in order to ponder his position, he was brought before the Convocation of the province of Canterbury on March 1, 1410, when the Archbishop patiently exhorted the poor man to recant. But Badby stuck firm to his opinions : he even irreverently declared that the Bread was

a thing withoute soule, wers than a tode [toad], or a ereyen [spider], which have lyf.

There was no hope of saving the poor fellow's soul, so he was

handed over to the secular arm for punishment by the 'burning death.'

It would be difficult to imagine a more disgusting sight than that which met the eyes of the crowd at the execution of Badby at Smithfield. Shackled hand and foot he was placed 'in a tunne,' to which the burning faggots were applied. Around him pressed bishops and clergy waiting anxiously for his recantation: one was even present with the Sacrament. But there was no recantation: as the fires licked up the sides of the barrel the wretched fellow 'cried horribly.' Henry of Monmouth was present. Stepping forward through the crowd around the stake he ordered the burning brands to be removed: such courage struck a sympathetic chord in the young prince's valiant heart. He

counceled him to forsake this fals opinion ;

and even promised him a pension of threepence a day for the rest of his life if he would admit the error of his opinions. Gasping for breath and almost insensible with pain, Badby refused. The faggots were piled back and he was

brent into ashes.

No man died more valiantly than Badby for his religious convictions.

Archbishop fitzAlan must have found it more difficult to deal with another case of Lollardy: there the object of his attack was a great country gentleman and one of the bravest and most capable of Henry of Monmouth's captains. Sir John Oldcastle, in the right of his wife Lord Cobham, was attracted by the Wiclifite teaching; and he protected many of the poor Lollard preachers in his mansions in Kent and Herefordshire. Archbishop fitzAlan learnt that Oldcastle's chaplain at Cooling in the former county was in the habit of mixing up 'tares and heresies' in his sermons; and he ordered the Dean of Rochester to place the churches on the Oldcastle estates under an interdict. The social importance of the Cobham family was sufficiently great to ensure a more delicate handling of the proceedings than the

Archbishop himself would have liked ; and the matter was smoothed over. Two years later [1413], on the eve of Henry's death, Oldcastle's Lollard sympathies were again in the limelight : a certain John Lay, a notorious Lollard, was cited before the Archbishop for ' heretical pravity,' and in the course of his examination he confessed that he had ' celebrated ' before Lord Cobham [Oldcastle] in London. The death of the king, however, necessitated a postponement of the attack on Oldcastle ; but it was already clear that Archbishop fitzAlan was bent upon a trial of conclusions with this distinguished member of the gentry.<sup>1</sup>

It is a misreading of the history of Henry's reign and a depreciation of his character to think that in ecclesiastical affairs he was completely under the thumb of Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury. On occasions the royal will was resolutely asserted, and projects were carried through which Henry knew that the Archbishop disliked. The most striking example of this independence is obviously the death of Archbishop Richard Scrope in the face of the impassioned pleadings of his brother of Canterbury. Henry was a lover of law and order : he was perfectly willing to allow fitzAlan a free hand in establishing law and order within the Church, but in secular affairs it was to be understood that the king himself was supreme ; and when ecclesiastics [like the friars and Scrope] disturbed the peace of the realm they were punished without any regard for their sacred callings. It is a tribute to Archbishop fitzAlan's statesmanship that he never hastened a clash between the spiritual and secular jurisdictions : on the contrary, as the incident of his quarrel with the authorities at Oxford clearly shows, he was by no means averse from buttressing the ecclesiastical with the secular authority.

On coming to the throne, Henry swore solemnly to provide the Church with worthy bishops. Whether or not that promise was fulfilled depends upon the meaning given

<sup>1</sup> I have dealt fully with Oldcastle's trial for heresy in my *Henry V.* [Barker] : see pages 126-139.

to the word *worthy*. Henry Bowet, whom he sent to the see of Bath and Wells in 1401 in preference to the papal nominee, Richard Clifford, and later preferred to York despite the fact that Robert Hallam of Salisbury had been nominated for that see by the pope, was an excellent administrator and man of business. The same can be said of Nicholas Bubwith, who successively ruled the dioceses of Salisbury and London in this reign, and of Thomas Langley, appointed Bishop of Durham in 1406. Not one of them was renowned for saintliness of life ; but they were infinitely to be preferred to some of the reprobates [Wiclif stigmatised the bishops of his time as ' gabbers ' and ' fakers ' and the cardinals as ' carnal sodomites '] who had held episcopal office in Richard's reign. Thomas Langley certainly enjoyed a well-deserved reputation as a canonist ; and Henry lived long enough to see him given a cardinal's hat [1411].

Another appointment for which Henry himself was responsible was that of Philip Repyngton as Bishop of Lincoln. In his Oxford days this man had been a prominent supporter of Wiclif and was acclaimed as among the best scholars of his age. He recanted as early as 1382, and had been Chancellor of his University on no fewer than four separate occasions. Henry made him his Confessor in 1400, and a firm friendship was established between them. In 1408 Repyngton was created a cardinal by Gregory XII., a reward well merited though made no doubt in the hope that it would secure the friendly support of the English king.

But it was Henry who prevented Adam Usk from receiving the bishopric of Hereford on the death of his fellow-countryman, John Trefnant, in 1404. The pope [Boniface IX.] had nominated him as Trefnant's successor ; but Henry would not hear of it. Adam Usk confesses that he was

indicted as the chief leader and abettor of the Welsh, and perhaps not unrighteously,

in his undergraduate days ; and although he settled down to follow the profession of the law his wild spirits did not

altogether desert him, for in 1402 he coolly turned high-wayman and relieved a traveller in Westminster of his purse, with the result that he left his country for his country's good and took sanctuary in Rome. It is not to be supposed that Henry had any scruples about preferring such a man to high ecclesiastical office: it is more likely that he thought a man with Adam Usk's strong nationalist sympathies a most unsuitable candidate for a see on the Anglo-Welsh border.

It is more difficult to understand why Henry opposed the papal nomination of Robert Hallam for the archiepiscopal see of York. Hallam was a virtuous and scholarly man, who had risen to be Chancellor of the University of Oxford. He took a conspicuous part in the Councils of Pisa and Constance; and when the Church was gravely arguing about the fate of Hus he shocked all good churchmen with a plea for toleration, basing his argument on the Biblical injunction that 'God willeth not the death of a sinner.' Hallam was Bishop of Salisbury from 1407 to 1417.

Nor can it be said that Henry's opposition to papal nominees was due to an inherent dislike of foreign dictation. He showed the same independence in episcopal appointments towards cathedral chapters as towards the pope. When on the death of the fighting Bishop of Norwich, Henry Despencer, the chapter elected Alexander Tottington to succeed to the see, Henry not only refused to recognise the election but promptly clapped Tottington into prison, and kept him there for more than a year. Archbishop fitzAlan certainly used his influence to secure the prisoner's release; but there is no record that he reprimanded Henry for the serious fault of leaving a diocese without a superior for such a long period.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### ENMITIES AND FRIENDSHIPS ABROAD

MEDIÆVAL diplomacy was conducted in such a tortuous way that it is almost impossible to give a coherent and intelligible account of the foreign affairs of the period. Wars were regularly interrupted by truces, but seldom terminated by peace settlements; and mediæval diplomatists took infinite delight in wrangling over matters of little consequence. A legal quibble was deemed reasonable excuse for escape from an obligation; delays in negotiations were deliberately engineered solely with the object of putting an opponent at a disadvantage; and solemn oaths and honourable pledges were broken in shameless manner. The truth is that the absence of decisive military engagements postponed the establishment of peace between warring states.

When Henry seized the throne in 1399 he inherited formidable foreign complications. A state of war existed between England on the one side and France and Scotland on the other, though for the moment truces effected a lull in hostilities. With France there was a long-term truce, extending until 1424; but the truce with Scotland was due to expire on September 29, 1399. Naturally enough Henry, confronted with the task of establishing himself on the throne of England, was anxious to avoid complications with either country. But it must have been perfectly clear to him that from the side of France only trouble was to be expected, because Richard's queen, Isabella, was a French princess. And what the French did to-day the Scots would do to-morrow.

Enmities cut deep into the hearts of mediæval peoples. Governments might officially make peace or negotiate truces ; but their subjects did not necessarily regard such engagements as binding upon themselves. Along the Anglo-Scottish border, and in the English Channel, a state of war existed perpetually. Forays were made and reciprocated over the border. The merchant shipping of France and England was plundered by corsairs. Seldom did governments punish such breaches of faith. Officially raids and piracy were repudiated, but unofficially they were applauded, and sometimes actually rewarded.

Henry inherited much of his father's appreciation of peace. In his dealings with England's enemies he was conciliatory, and as scrupulous as they permitted him to be. He showed little or no desire for military aggrandisement abroad. Such restraint may have been the outcome of necessity, but a man of weaker character would have forgotten his personal needs, and in defence of what he would have described as his country's honour would have plunged his country into disastrous wars. When Henry made war he did so to defend himself ; and it is well to remember that attack is the best form of defence.

In foreign affairs the immediate problem was Scotland. Towards the end of September 1399, even before he had been crowned, Henry sent messengers to Scotland to ask for an extension of the truce which expired on the 29th of the month. Robert III. of Scotland was a degenerate ; and while theoretically he remained the head of his government, the real control was shared between David, Duke of Rothesay, and Robert, Duke of Albany. To Henry's overtures Robert replied that the matter was one which must be discussed by his parliament : it was not then in session, but an early opportunity would be taken to call the parliament-men together, and in due course their decision would be communicated to Henry.

Whatever may have been the intentions of the Scottish government, the Scots in the Lowlands lost no time in

harassing the northern English shires. The Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland were away from their estates : their tenants were smitten with ' a great mortalitie ' or an epidemic of plague. It was a good time for Scots to raid ; and they made the most of it, robbing and burning and slaying to their hearts' content. This infuriated Henry. He gave out that he would lead an army into Scotland to demand reparation. Northumberland and Westmorland both opposed his plan in open parliament, and the commons respectfully reminded him that he ought not to entertain such a scheme until he had consolidated his position as king. Henry thanked them for their advice, but regretted that he could not take it ; and he sought to justify his threat by bravely declaring that he would strain every nerve and face any danger in the defence of his country's honour and his subjects' liberties.

Reflection brought him to a more reasonable state of mind, and diplomacy was preferred to armed intervention. In a statesmanlike and dignified letter to Robert III, he protested strongly against the raiding activities of the Lowland Scots, and followed on with a suggestion that representatives from both sides should meet at Kelso on January 5, 1400, to discuss the formal prolongation of the truce. Not until the following March did the Scottish king reply to that letter.

The Scots had decided that it was in their interests to play a waiting game. Tales of discontent in England [by no means untrue] and the belief that the French were about to attack Henry made the Scots disinclined to tie their hands in any way which would render it impossible for them to take advantage of the misfortunes of the southern kingdom. Moreover, it was whispered that Henry was in treasonable correspondence with some of the disaffected subjects of the Scottish king, notably with George Dunbar, Earl of March.

That was true. Dunbar was angered because Rothesay had repudiated a betrothal to his [Dunbar's] daughter in order to marry into the family of Archibald, Earl Douglas ;

and in a fit of injured pride he resolved to transfer his allegiance to Henry, provided that the English king would promise to assist him in taking vengeance on Rothesay.

It is surprising how easily Henry swallowed the bait. It at once changed his relations with the Scots; for the acceptance postulated a revival of the ancient claim of overlordship of the kingdom of Scotland. There is every reason to suppose that Dunbar, in his own interests, misinformed Henry about the internal affairs of Scotland: he could easily use the quarrels arising out of the control of Robert's person as evidence of hopeless divisions within the realm, and it would not have been difficult to persuade the English king that an attack on Scotland would meet with quick success. But Henry should have been wiser than to listen to such talk: the experience of his predecessors showed that even a divided Scotland was able to resist the monstrous demand of English overlordship.

Towards the end of May 1400, therefore, Henry adopted a stronger line with the Scots. Robert III. was informed that as a party to the Anglo-French agreement of 1396 it was his duty not only to check the lawless activities of the Lowlanders, but also to make reparation for the damage which they had already done. Then, without even waiting for a reply to this communication, Henry mustered an army and marched it into the North Country, actually taking up quarters in York on June 22. He continued to fulminate against the perfidy of the Scottish government, but his own actions were by no means above reproach, and he took no steps to curb the lawlessness of his own border subjects. Indeed, he was overjoyed when the news came to York that the sailors of King's Lynn had taken in a sea engagement off Berwick Sir Robert Logan, Admiral of Scotland, and David Seton, Archdeacon of Ross, who were travelling with dispatches to the French court.

The reply which Henry eventually received from Scotland was cunningly framed: the Scottish government was willing to negotiate with Henry on the basis of the Treaty of Northampton of 1328. By this treaty England had

agreed to recognise the complete independence of Scotland. It was Henry's turn to play for time. He pretended not to take offence at the suggestion, when all the time he must have been aware that it was meant to force his hands. The Scots did not realise his predicament: he lay at York unable to undertake an advance into Scotland owing to lack of funds and to fear of a French landing in the southern shires.

The French danger was removed [see page 234]: money was scraped together. Then it was that Henry formally announced that he intended to assert his right to the overlordship of Scotland, and in a most provocative communication summoned Robert III. and the baronage of Scotland to meet him in Edinburgh to do homage to their English overlord. Rothesay lost no time in sending a spirited reply to that letter: he likened Henry to a common thief, but at the same time he was willing to put the matter to the test of combat, and suggested that 100 or 200 or 300 men from either side should meet for that purpose. Henry refused to accept the challenge, and on August 14 he led his men into Scotland. Edinburgh was taken without much difficulty; but Robert III. and his barons were not there to perform the required homage; and after hanging about for some days, and failing to carry the fortress at Dalhousie, Henry was willing to discuss terms.

When the Scots said that they would give careful consideration to the question of overlordship, Henry withdrew out of their country. But from start to finish the expedition was a miserable failure: it merely postponed a final settlement of the differences between the two kingdoms, and from a military point of view [as Adam Usk noted] the honours went to the Scots.

They slew and took prisoners very many of our men,  
doing us more harm than we did to them.

And no sooner was the English force clear of the North  
than both sides renewed the old border raids!

Fortunately the English were able to hold their own,

and in one engagement, fought at Redesdale, the Scots received a rough handling from Sir Robert Umfraville. It was sufficiently effective to persuade the Scots that a truce was desirable, and eventually it was agreed that a six weeks' truce should come into force from November 9, 1400.

On both sides there were men eager for peace. Commissioners met and discussed terms ; and there was every prospect that a permanent peace would be arranged. It was even decided that Northumberland and Rothesay should meet at Melrose in April 1401 to discuss details ; but the meeting never took place, for when April came, Rothesay was languishing in a prison, and the control of the Scottish government was in the hands of Douglas, an implacable enemy of Englishmen in general and of Northumberland in particular.

Henry handled the situation in a masterly way. He was meticulous in his relations with the northern kingdom. He refused to break off negotiations although he knew that Douglas stood at the head of a war party ; and when a Scot in London was condemned to be mutilated for having spoken disparagingly of the English king he pardoned the man and sent him back to his own people. He nominated Richard Yonge, Bishop of Bangor, William Strickland, Bishop of Carlisle, Northumberland, Westmorland, and Harry Hotspur to act as the commissioners in the negotiations with Douglas ; and he armed them with wide powers, though he indicated to them the main lines of his policy. They were to try to sustain the claim for overlordship on the ground that it would ensure a lasting peace between the two kingdoms ; but if the Scots rejected the claim, they were to work for a long-term truce. They were to dangle before the Scots the prospect of a marriage alliance between the two royal houses ; and were to use their influence to get Dunbar restored to his Scottish estates. If the Scots would accept none of these conditions, then the commissioners must try to arrange a one-year truce as from November 11, 1401.

Northumberland and Douglas met at Yetham in Roxburgh about mid-October. From the outset it was clear that there would be no permanent settlement of the dispute. Neither Northumberland nor Douglas could forget the ancient feud between their families ; and when the meeting broke up, the Scots had rejected even the offer of a one-year truce. War seemed inevitable.

Douglas made the first move. On February 1, 1402, he sent a letter to Henry in which he charged Northumberland with disturbing the peace of the border. The earl vehemently denied the charge ; and Westmorland staunchly supported him. Henry, too, stood by Northumberland : in his reply to Douglas he stated that while he could not believe the allegations he was nevertheless ready to nominate commissioners to inquire into the matter. This offer was immediately rejected.

Henry thereupon sent Northumberland, Westmorland, and Hotspur back to their northern estates. He made a feeble effort to raise money so that they could make the necessary preparations for the threatened invasion : he sent them a reasonable amount of stores and ordnance. But already Northumberland and Hotspur were shaky in their allegiance ; and when after the capture of Hotspur's brother-in-law, Sir Edmund Mortimer, by the Welsh in June 1402, the king openly said that Mortimer was not an unwilling captive, Hotspur's fury knew no bounds. But the threatened invasion compelled him to reserve protest : his first duty was to protect the Percy patrimony.

About the same time that Rhys Gethin was humbling the power of England at Pilleth, a force of 12,000 Scots was at large in Cumberland. They harried the country even to the gates of Carlisle ; but Bishop Strickland quickly mustered an army, and drove the Scots back helter-skelter over the border. At Nesbit, Dunbar smashed another raiding band. These victories gave the northern defence a breathing space. But in September the main Scottish army, commanded by Douglas and Murdoch Stuart, Master

of Fife, crossed the border, and the fate of the North hung in the balance. How that great army of nearly 40,000 men was crushed at Humbledon Hill on September 14, by Northumberland and Hotspur, has already been recounted [see page 177]. It will also be recalled that in the spring of 1403, Henry formally 'annexed' a considerable part of southern Scotland, and bestowed much of the 'conquered' territory on the Percies as a reward for their services. Henry was on his way north to assist Northumberland and Hotspur to hold down the 'conquest,' when the news came that the latter was in arms against him at Chester; and the collapse of the Percy rebellion with the death of Hotspur at Shrewsbury, and the submission of Northumberland at York, coincided with the Scottish 'reconquest' of southern Scotland.

Shrewsbury gave Henry one great advantage. Douglas was now his prisoner; and in Scotland this man was talked of as the strongest claimant for the Scottish throne on the death of Robert III. If Albany, the head of the Scottish government, was to retain his power it was imperative that Douglas should remain in England; and that forced him to adopt a conciliatory attitude in his dealings with Henry. Thus, in December 1403, commissioners met to discuss terms; but a scheme for the marriage of the son of the captured Douglas to a French princess, which came to Henry's ears in January 1404, revived the suspicion that the Scots were not sincere in their desire for peace; and as a result the negotiations broke down.

To turn to a survey of Anglo-French relations. The deposition of Richard carried with it the degradation of a French princess. In the earlier part of the reign, therefore, Anglo-French relations centred round the future of Isabella. Her extreme youth [she was still in her teens] naturally enough added to the fears of her parents. She was at the mercy of a man who had ruthlessly dispossessed her husband of his throne, if not actually consenting to his murder; and the uncertainty of her position so worried



Charles VI. that it brought on one of his periodical attacks of insanity.

Henry opened with a genuine show of friendship. Towards the end of November 1399, he sent two of the most experienced diplomats in his service [Walter Skirlawe, Bishop of Durham, and Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester] to Charles to suggest a marriage between one of his sons and a French princess. But this overture was ignored. Indeed, shortly afterwards, Charles made it abundantly clear that his feelings towards Henry were hostile. He closed the Somme to English merchant shipping; he ordered Waleran of Luxemburg, Count of St Pol, to attack and seize Pembroke and Tenby, settled by the English on Isabella at the time of her marriage to Richard; and Louis, Duke of Bourbon, went south to stir up trouble among the English king's subjects in the duchy of Aquitaine.

At the end of January, when the French were convinced that Richard was no longer living, Charles' one thought was to secure the return of his daughter. Envoys from the two countries met, and it was agreed between them that a formal parley should take place at Lelighen before the end of the coming February. Henry's spies in France kept him well informed as to the temper of the French government: it was clear that while the French were openly talking peace they were secretly preparing to make an attack on Henry; and the English at once took steps to meet it. Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Rutland, was sent to uphold the English rule in Aquitaine; the defences of the South Coast were strengthened; stores were hoarded in the Cinque Ports; and English ships, prowling about the Channel, kept a sharp look out for the armament collected to seize Pembroke and Tenby.

That these warlike preparations were justified is shown by the attitude which the French took up when the English envoys arrived in France for the suggested conference at Lelighen. A courteous request for a safe conduct to proceed to the place of meeting was met by the arrest of the English herald, and no conference took place. On April

6, 1400, two French envoys crossed to England with a message from Charles VI. to

him who calls himself the king of England.

With commendable restraint Henry ignored the insult, and gave the Frenchman audience. They told him that Charles VI. was not prepared to recognise as valid any agreement signed by Isabella without her father's consent, and demanded her return to her own country without further delay, and with the monies and presents to which she was legally entitled under the agreement of 1396.

It was the last condition which troubled Henry. By the marriage agreement of 1396 it was laid down that Isabella should be free to return to her native land if the marriage was not consummated or Richard predeceased her ; and in either of these circumstances she was to receive a portion of her dowry as well as the gifts made at the time of the marriage. Henry in 1396 was one of the members of the baronage who had sworn solemnly to honour these conditions.

In hard cash Charles VI.'s claim amounted to 200,000 francs. It is only fair to say that the claim was both reasonable and just. But Henry was at his wits' end for money. It is quite clear, therefore, that he hoped to get over this question of repayment, either by marrying Isabella to one of his sons or by finding some flaw in the agreement of 1396 ; and for the next few months these hopes coloured the English diplomacy.

In the middle of May 1400, the council in England announced that they would respect the agreement of 1396, but at the same time they expressed the hope that a marriage might be arranged on conditions satisfactory to both countries. A little later three English envoys were sent on a

secret embassy to the King of France.

They were away ten weeks ; but unfortunately the nature of their talks is not now known. They certainly raised no

objection to the French demand that Isabella must be allowed to return home, and even agreed that this step might be taken before the coming Candlemas [February 1401]. The French, however, appear to have urged that Isabella's return should take place before the beginning of November 1400; and it is not unlikely that it was on the question of her return that the conference was adjourned, the English envoys wishing to put the French proposal before Henry and his council.

At the same time Henry explored the possibilities of a flaw in the agreement of 1396. Adam Usk informs his readers that a number of prominent lawyers [he was one of them] was invited to give opinions on the legal aspect of the French demands; but while he was at pains to detail the questions submitted to them by Henry, Adam is silent on the decisions arrived at; and the only conclusion to be drawn from his record and the march of subsequent events is that the lawyers found no legal justification for a repudiation of the agreement of 1396.

Negotiations dragged on. A better understanding was reached when French envoys found that Isabella at Haverling-at-Bow in Essex was well treated at Henry's commands; but the death of a French diplomat in England, followed as it was by hints of foul play, revived the old enmities; and the persistent interference of French agents in Aquitaine convinced the majority of Englishmen that Charles was bent upon war.

When the French would not listen to the suggestion of a marriage alliance, Henry skilfully put forward a financial counter-claim—the unpaid portion of the ransom of the French king John taken by Edward Black Prince at Poitiers in 1356. It amounted to 1,200,000 crowns. Moreover, the English envoys who went to Lelighen in May 1401 abandoned the customary finesse, and openly informed the French that Isabella would not be allowed to return as long as the French interfered in Aquitainian affairs. By the 27th of the month, therefore, the basis of a settlement was reached: (1) the English undertook to have Isabella at

Dover on July 1 ready to cross to her own land with the first favourable wind ; (2) the French agreed that Isabella should pledge herself never to interfere in English affairs after her return to France ; and (3) a conference at Lelighen, to meet four days after Isabella's restoration to her parents, was to deal with the French financial claims and the English counter-claims, and the matter of French interference in Aquitaine.

The English council immediately approved these conditions, and steps were taken to ensure that Isabella's departure was carried through with honour and dignity. Bishop Skirlawe of Durham, Bishop Trefnant of Hereford, and the Earl of Somerset were detailed to act as her escort. The Cinque Ports were requested to send three barges and two balingers to Dover in readiness for the crossing on July 1. Henry himself hurried back from the Anglo-Welsh border to attend the farewell ceremonies. At this point, however, a section of the council urged Henry not to proceed with the business : ugly facts persuaded them that the French were unlikely to keep their part of the bargain ; and they felt that the control of Isabella's person was a useful diplomatic weapon to instil sweet reasonableness into the French. But Henry would not listen to their arguments, and they were not strong enough to compel him to accept their advice.

On June 26, Bishops Skirlawe and Trefnant and the Earl of Somerset reached Havering-at-Bow in Essex ; and early on the next day the journey to the coast began. At Tottenham they were joined by Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, and a great retinue : at Stamford they were received by the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen of the city of London : at Stamford, Prince Thomas, Northumberland, and Westmorland attached themselves to the procession. They led Isabella to the palace at Westminster, where she stayed the night.

Her departure was carried through in an atmosphere of unreality. Throughout the proceedings she wore the deepest mourning ; she would not open her lips in Henry's

presence; and when she rode forth through London's streets the crowds stood silently by, raising no farewell cheer, and showing open delight that she was leaving the land. To the people of England Isabella was an evil genius of Richard's reign. To win her hand Richard had sacrificed his country's honour by making concessions to the hated French; and her youth deprived her of the opportunity of winning the favours of her husband's people, in the same way as Anne of Bohemia had done. There were grumbings, too, when it was noised abroad that more than £8000 of the nation's money had been expended on the preparations for Isabella's restoration.

Isabella remained in Dover for a month owing to bad weather. On July 28 she entered Calais; and three days later she was escorted to Lelighen where French envoys were waiting to welcome her back to her native land. In tears she took her leave of the English ladies who had been members of her household at Havering-at-Bow; and on the arm of Worcester she went forward from the English pavilion to meet St Pol, whom Charles VI. had deputed to receive her. St Pol thereupon gave Worcester the document wherein Charles released Henry from all obligations except the repayment of the 200,000 francs of Isabella's dowry; and the same evening at the High Altar in the Abbey Church of St Mary in Boulogne Isabella swore never to interfere in the affairs of England. She signed a deed to that effect in the presence of the Bishop of Chartres; and it was carried away to the English headquarters by a notary.

On August 3 the final act in the drama of Isabella's restoration took place. At Lelighen English and French envoys signed an agreement whereby it was agreed to deal with the outstanding questions [the financial claims and counter-claims, French interference in Aquitaine, and the depredations of the pirates in the Channel] at a conference to be held on St Martin's Day [November 11], 1401.

A detailed account of Anglo-French relations during

1401-2 makes tedious reading. Conferences were held, but the discussions led nowhere. Towards the end of 1402, however, some of the ingredients of comic opera were introduced into the relations of both countries.

Henry happened to be playing a game with some of his personal attendants at Westminster when a servant announced that a herald from Louis, Duke of Orleans, was outside. He was brought in, and presented a letter from his master. In every respect it was a courteous communication: the duke pointed out that since idleness was bad for princes it would be a laudable thing for Henry and himself, each at the head of one hundred knights, to meet in combat on the borders of Aquitaine. The letter must have been a bolt from the blue. Henry had been on intimate terms with Orleans, and during his exile in Paris had been promised material support by the French duke.

Early in December Henry sent his reply. In it he did not conceal his surprise at Orleans' presumption in sending such a letter, particularly when they had pledged themselves to be good friends; and he reminded the duke that God in His own time would find them plenty of work to counteract the evils of idleness. It was not the habit of an English king, he went on, to entertain challenges from persons of lower rank than king, and when he wished to visit Aquitaine he would do so without any invitation from the duke, though when that visit took place he would willingly meet any attack which the French might make against him. The real sting of the reply lay in the latter part of the letter:

And God knows, and we would have all men know, that this our answer proceeds not from arrogance, or presumption of heart, or to lay reproach on any honest gentleman who holds his honour dear, but only to bring down the pride and confidence of the man [whoever he might be] who cannot know and keep his proper station, and if you really claim to be a knight free from reproach, take heed to keep your pledged word for the future better than you are doing now.

Orleans' rage knew no bounds when he read Henry's letter ; but he was sensible enough to realise that he had put himself in the wrong, and he paused to reflect carefully upon the nature of his reply.

In February 1403 Henry was the recipient of another strange letter. This time it came from Waleran of Luxemburg, Count of St Pol ; and it was offensively addressed to 'the Duke of Lancaster.' St Pol plainly hinted that Henry was responsible for the death of Richard ; and as the husband of the dead man's half-sister [Maud Courtenay] he vowed he would damage Henry's interests on land and sea as long as he lived. The challenge was contemptuously dismissed : the herald was told to inform St Pol that he would be better employed in looking after his estates. The best retaliation which the irate count could think of was to hang Rutland by the heels in effigy outside Calais ! Why Rutland no one knew.

The truce between England and France expired on April 30, 1403 : on that day Henry received a second letter from Orleans. The duke denied that he was ever bound by ties of friendship to the English king ; and somewhat inconsistently suggested that even if that had been the case he could no longer entertain regard and affection for a man who had deposed his lawful king. Further, there was a hint that the matter had not ended with deposition ; and the letter concluded with a renewal of the challenge given in the first letter.

Henry's reply was cunningly drafted. He called Orleans' attention to the fact that he [the duke] was party to Henry's return to England in 1399, and that not only had his friends been guests at the coronation, but subsequently in a secret communication Orleans had reassured Henry of his friendship. Orleans was reminded that it was common knowledge that he meant to overthrow his uncle, Philip *le Hardi*, Duke of Burgundy ; and in that he was acting far more disloyally towards his king and kinsman than ever Henry had acted towards Richard. Finally Henry warned the duke that if he persisted in maintaining that he [Henry]

was in any way responsible for Richard's death, he would make him eat his words in combat.

We know not with what end or intention you say it, but if you mean or dare to say that it was by us or our consent, it is false and will be every time you say it.

Henry was always peculiarly touchy on the subject of Richard's death.

The French were clearly resolved to make the most of Henry's difficulties in England. Great French noblemen like St Pol, de la Marche, Vendôme, and Jean de Clarency not only protected the French corsairs in the English Channel, but actually themselves engaged in piratical acts against the English shipping. In August 1403 a French raiding party landed at Plymouth, and sacked and burnt the town. A month later Orleans invaded Aquitaine. He invested Bordeaux from the land side, while his friend, St Pol, with a fleet blockaded the maritime approaches; but the stern resistance of a handful of loyalists within the town, and bad weather at sea, prevented Bordeaux from falling into the hands of the French.

Sometimes Henry is blamed for a lack of foresight in naval policy. It is argued that he gave the minimum of attention to the needs of the fleet, and as a result the French were able to wrest the supremacy of the seas from the English. It must be admitted that Henry did not spend vast sums of money on naval armaments, and that was due entirely to his extreme poverty; but the facts of history by no means prove that the French were overwhelmingly superior to the English at sea. Charles VI. had to apologise to Robert III. for not communicating to him a matter of mutual interest, but he was not reluctant to admit that he could not do so because the English 'held the seas.' When St Pol landed in the Isle of Wight in December 1403, Henry Beaufort, the Chancellor, was able truthfully to inform the parliament-men in the following January that the French raiders had

neither ventured to wait nor to stay.



Moreover, when the direction of maritime operations was in the hands of Thomas Beaufort in 1404 [and his appointment to this important post has led one of Henry's critics to describe it as 'another family job'] the English more than held their own in the Channel. An English landing party successfully ravaged St Pol's lands in Picardy; and when Guillaume du Chastel landed near Dartmouth, he was so badly hammered that his followers fled to their ships, leaving him mortally wounded on the field and a number of their companions prisoners in English hands. These naval successes were regarded by contemporaries as sufficiently spectacular to warrant the singing of a solemn *Te Deum* in Paul's Church in London.

For some time the Welsh rebels had hankered after a formal Franco-Welsh alliance. In June 1404 Gruffydd Yonge, Owen's Chancellor, and John Hanmer, Owen's brother-in-law, went to France to discuss this matter. They were graciously received at the French court, Charles VI. going to the extent of presenting them with a personal gift [a gilded helm, a cuirass, and sword] for their leader; and within a month of opening negotiations a formal treaty of alliance was signed in the house of Arnaud de Corbie, the French Chancellor [July 14, 1404]. By this instrument Charles and Owen bound themselves to make common cause against 'Henry of Lancaster'; and arrangements were made for a French force to proceed to the succour of the Welsh rebels. It did not matter in the least that the alliance was a flagrant breach of the truce between England and France: Orleans was then in control of the French government, and he had old scores to settle with Henry.

But if matters had gone not altogether smoothly with Scotland and France, Henry had good cause to congratulate himself upon the way in which his seizure of the throne was received in other quarters. Early in October 1399 he wrote to the Doge of Venice inviting Venetian traders to come freely to England; and the invitation was graciously

accepted, ambassadors being straightaway appointed to reside in London. When the Hanseatic League sought a renewal of their trading privileges, Henry took the opportunity to secure for the English merchants better conditions of commerce in the German towns of the League. And the rulers of Spain and Portugal, with William, Duke of Guelders, and Albert, Count of Holland and Zeeland, extended their friendship to Henry at the very outset of his reign.

Towards the end of 1400, Manuel II., the Emperor of the East, honoured Henry with a visit. He was on a somewhat undignified tour of the lands of western Europe in order to raise money for the defence of Byzantium against the warlike Turks. Henry met him at Blackheath on December 21, and with magnificent pageantry brought him to London. The strange habits and clothes of the visitors naturally aroused the Londoners' curiosity. Wrote Adam Usk :

This emperor always walked with his men, dressed alike and in one colour, namely, white, in long robes cut like tabards ; he finding fault with the many fashions and distinctions in the dress of the English, wherein he said that fickleness and changeable temper were betokened. No razor ever touched head or beard of his chaplains.

Money was shamelessly squandered on a round of entertainments for Manuel and his retinue. At Eltham, where he spent Christmas with Henry, there were banquets and minstrelsy, jousts and tournaments ; and one of the special attractions was provided by the City Fathers of the capital.

The men of London maden a gret mommyng to hym of xij aldermen and there sones, for whiche they hadde gret thanke.

But Manuel was not reluctant to remind his hosts that he was on a begging visit ; and in January 1401 Henry invited his subjects to subscribe handsomely to a cause

which could not fail to touch their hearts. The Church granted indulgences most liberally, and allowed the proceeds to swell Manuel's fund. How much money was actually collected it is impossible to say ; but the state contributed 3000 marks ; and either overjoyed at the Englishman's liberality, or perhaps disgusted at his parsimony, Manuel took his leave of Henry in February.

A month before the Greeks left England Henry was flattered by a request from the Holy Roman Emperor, Rupert III., for the hand of Henry's daughter, Blanche, for his eldest son, the Duke Ludwig. John Trefnant, Bishop of Hereford, John of Bottleham, Bishop of Rochester, Northumberland, and Westmorland were entrusted with the task of going into the question with the German envoys ; and on March 7, 1401, a draft marriage treaty was presented to Henry for his consideration. Blanche was to be taken to meet Ludwig at Cologne at Easter, 1402, after which they would proceed to Heidelberg to be married : the dowry was fixed at 40,000 nobles.

From a political point of view it was a good match ; but finding the money for dowry caused Henry considerable trouble. Indeed so poor was his credit everywhere in the city of London that he found it extremely difficult to provide Blanche with the necessary trousseau, part of which incidentally came from the shop of the mercer, Richard Whittington, a vastly different person from the hero of the pantomime tale. The feudal aid, *for the marriage of the king's daughter*, did not yield anything like the amount of money needed for the first instalment of the dowry ; and the council remained deaf to Henry's arguments that the marriage would result in great advantages to the realm.

The upshot of the arrangement was that Blanche did not leave England until June 21, 1402. She was taken overseas by Richard Clifford, Bishop of Worcester, the Countess of Salisbury, and the Earl of Somerset ; and after a short stay with Count Adolf II. at Cleves the party passed on to Cologne, where the Duke Ludwig was awaiting his bride. He was immediately charmed by the little

lady's gracious manner and good looks ; but, on the other hand, the English party was somewhat taken aback by the plainness of the young man's appearance and his ill-fitting clothes. Blanche and Ludwig were married at Heidelberg on July 6 ; and although their married life was destined to be a comparatively short one [Blanche died on May 22, 1406, in giving birth to her first child] it was ideally happy. The German people long remembered the English princess who so quickly and sincerely identified herself with their life and culture.

Henry's second marriage, to Joanna of Brittany, has often been thought to have the fragrance of a romance about it. Joanna was the daughter of Charles II., ' the Bad,' of Navarre ; and her first husband was John de Montfort, Duke of Brittany, who was considerably her senior. It is said that during his exile Henry stayed with them in their Breton home ; and it has therefore been presumed that during that time they came to ' an understanding.' The Duke died in the beginning of November 1399 ; and certainly in the following February Joanna wrote a charming little note to Henry, in which she confessed that

whenever I am able to hear a good account of you it rejoices my heart most exceedingly.

There was an impediment to their union : in the eyes of the Church they were related within the fourth degree of consanguinity. The Avignonese pope, Benedict XIII., swept this aside by dispensation on March 20, 1402 ; and although the Church in England regarded him as schismatic the hierarchy does not appear to have raised any objection to the irregularity of the proceedings. A proxy marriage was solemnised on April 3, 1402, in the king's private chapel at Eltham, Henry placing the ring on the finger of Antione Ricze, Joanna's representative ; and the witnesses of the ceremony were Northumberland, Somerset, and Worcester. For some reason or other, however, the proxy marriage was kept a dark secret.

Few husbands can have experienced greater difficulty

than Henry did in bringing a bride home. He ordered ships and men for the purpose, but he had not the means to pay their wages; and when, after scraping together the necessary funds, they actually made ready to set out, storms delayed them. It was not until December 1402 that final arrangements for the homecoming of the new queen were completed; and then a month elapsed before she put foot on English soil [January 19, 1403]. Henry met Joanna at Winchester, where they were married by Henry Beaufort, then Bishop of Lincoln; and a few days later they entered London in solemn state. The Londoners gave the new queen a cordial reception, even though many still believed in the old superstition that a French queen brought with her bad luck. The more optimistic, however, consoled themselves with the fact that Joanna was a Spaniard; but the citizens of Bedford, Bristol, Derby, Ipswich, and Yarmouth, out of whose pockets yearly was to come the 10,000 marks marriage settlement, had certainly good reason to dislike the marriage.

Henry was a confirmed believer in the political importance of marriage alliances. Late in the spring of 1401, Richard Yonge, Bishop of Bangor, and John Perant were in Denmark discussing with Margaret, the Regent of the three Scandinavian kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, a double marriage alliance—the young Scandinavian king, Eric, to Henry's daughter, Philippa, and Henry of Monmouth to Eric's sister, Katherine. Marriages meant money, and the English council, foreseeing the difficulty of collecting sufficient for Philippa's dowry, was hesitant about endorsing the king's policy. But Henry had his way. In May the young Henry of Monmouth signed the betrothal deed in the Tower, thereby pledging himself to marry Katherine; and a few days later Philippa and Eric were formally betrothed.

It was four years before the latter marriage was carried through. The old trouble of providing money for the dowry caused repeated delays; and even when Eric generously agreed to take Philippa without a dowry, not

much greater expedition was put into the negotiations. Eventually on December 26, 1405, there was a proxy marriage in the Abbey Church of Westminster; and a fortnight later Philippa was proclaimed Queen of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. It was agreed that she should sail for her new home in May 1406, but her father's inability to raise the money required to purchase her outfit postponed the departure until August.

Philippa was given a great 'send off' at King's Lynn. Henry himself, Joanna, and her three brothers, Henry, Thomas, and Humphrey, were there to wish her Godspeed; and the principal members of her escort were Henry Bowet, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Richard Plantagenet, brother of the Duke of York, Lord Scrope of Masham, and Richard Courtenay [later to become Bishop of Norwich and a boon companion of her brother, Henry of Monmouth]. They had a pleasant voyage to Helsingborg in Sweden, where Eric met them; and on October 26 the marriage was solemnised by Archbishop Jakob Gertsen in the cathedral church of Lund. Incidentally, the English escort thought Eric rather 'uncouth,' but they were quite prepared to admit that he was of 'comely' appearance. After the coronation they made their way back home.

In the latter part of Henry's reign an internal quarrel in France removed the danger of effective opposition from that quarter. In April 1404 [before the conclusion of the Franco-Welsh alliance] Philip *le Hardi*, Duke of Burgundy, died. His strong hand had guided the mad king's government and checked the factious inclinations of the turbulent French nobility. His place was immediately taken by Louis, Duke of Orleans, a man of very different mould, who lacked both the ability and the ruthlessness of Philip of Burgundy; and he was obsessed with a burning desire to break Burgundian power.

On his deathbed in the Stag Hostel at Hal, Philip of Burgundy had urged his sons not to plunge the realm of France into civil war; but his advice was quickly ignored

by his heir, Jean *Sans Peur* ; and at once began a struggle for control of the mad king's government. By a stroke of diplomatic genius, Jean of Burgundy arranged the betrothal of the Dauphin Louis to his daughter, Margaret ; and by patronising the University of Paris he won the powerful support of the learned doctors and masters. In a very short time he was looked upon as the champion of the people of France against a corrupt and tyrannical government ; and he was shrewd enough to make the most of that popular support.

Orleans was not prepared to hand over the power to Burgundy without a fierce struggle. With the help of Queen Isabella [the gossips openly said they were lovers] he was able to counter much of the Burgundian influence in the French court ; but by the summer of 1405 both sides were ready for an armed struggle. For the moment a clash was averted ; and with the appointment of the Dauphin Louis as Regent during his father's insanity, Burgundy felt that he had gained the advantage, since as the prospective father-in-law of the young prince he would be allowed to offer him counsel and advice.

Moreover, from the Orleanist point of view, things had gone badly. The failure of the French expedition to Wales during the winter of 1405-6 was mercilessly criticised by Burgundy as evidence of Orleans' incompetence ; and so was the handling of Franco-Scottish affairs. There was a widespread belief that on the death of Robert III. the throne would pass to Archibald, Earl Douglas, and not to James, Earl of Carrick, Robert's son and heir ; and since it was thought that Henry would favour such an arrangement French agents in Scotland were ordered to negotiate a marriage alliance on the basis of a union of James and a princess of France.

Fear for the safety of his son drove Robert III. into the arms of the pro-French party ; and in sheer desperation, and on the advice of the French agents, he decided to send the young prince to the French court. Naturally enough the real reason for this move was kept a secret : it was given out that Prince James was going to France to learn French

and 'curtestie.' When Henry heard of this he caustically remarked :

These unkind Scots ! Surely they might have sent the lad to me to rear and teach. I can French !

But Henry's luck was in. The young prince proved to be a bad sailor, and the captain of the merchantman in which he was sailing hugged the coast, with the result that a band of English pirates led by Sir John Prendergast took the ship on Palm Sunday [March 30] 1406.

The news of the capture killed Robert III. It filled Henry with the utmost joy : he was now in possession of the lawful king of Scotland ; and the threat to restore him was a diplomatic weapon which he knew how to wield to his own advantage. Thus, while there were the usual border forays, for which both sides were equally to blame, the enforced sojourn of James I. of Scotland in England ensured a better understanding between the two kingdoms than had existed for many years, and at the same time it deprived the French of an active and useful ally.

Charles VI. enjoyed a spell of good health in 1406, and taking control of the government himself, he was able to postpone a clash between Orleans and Burgundy. In that year both dukes set out to harass the English : Orleans once again to stir up trouble in Aquitaine, and Burgundy to attack Calais. But the old feud was stronger than their patriotism or hatred of the English. Each feared that the other would take advantage of his absence from the French capital to further his own interests. Orleans contented himself with sitting down before Bourg for three months, and was finally driven away ignominiously. Burgundy talked bravely about driving the English out of Calais into the sea, but his hostility never went farther than threats.

In November 1407 an entirely new complexion was put on Anglo-French relations. On the 23rd of that month, as he was making his way from the apartment of Queen Isabella to the court, Orleans was murdered in the Rue Barbette by a gang of ruffians. At first the crime was laid at the door



of Aubert le Flamenc, Lord of Cany, whose young wife Orleans had seduced and debauched ; but in time the ugly truth leaked out that the deed was done by Raoul d'Anctoville, a Norman squire in Burgundian pay ; and while it was politic at the time of the crime for Duke Jean to profess heartfelt grief at the death of his ' most dear cousin ' it was not long before he openly boasted that he had rid the country of a pest.

Orleans' son and heir, Charles, might have forgiven the crime. He was a savant, a lover of art and letters, a man of peace. But in 1410 he married Bonne, the daughter of Bernard VII., Count of Armagnac, a masterful man, who marshalled the Orleanist forces for the overthrow of Burgundy. So evenly matched were the Armagnac and Burgundian factions that it was apparent that neither side would triumph without outside assistance. Burgundy immediately looked to Henry for help ; and in 1411 Burgundian envoys were at the English court for the purpose of negotiating an alliance. Duke Jean was willing to surrender to the English Dixmude, Dunkirk, Gravelines, and Sluys ; and also to assist in the recovery of the ' ancient heritage ' of England's kings—the duchy of Normandy. It was further suggested that Henry of Monmouth might marry Anne, the Duke's fifth daughter. Henry toyed with the proposals for some time, and even agreed to send a force overseas to assist Burgundy ; but at the last moment the orders were countermanded by the king.

At this stage in the negotiations illness prevented Henry from taking any part in the affairs of the council, and his place was consequently taken by his son, Henry of Monmouth. Although he must have known that the Burgundian alliance no longer interested his father, he nevertheless sent an armed force to assist Burgundy. It was commanded by Arundel, and after a fierce engagement at St Cloud [November 9-10, 1411] overwhelmed the Armagnacs, and left Burgundy master of the situation.

The prince's action resulted in an estrangement between father and son. Henry, already sick unto death, resented

the way in which Henry of Monmouth had reversed his policy. He was doubtless testy as a result of his illness, and perhaps jealous of the growing popularity of his son with the people of the country. He knew, too, that one party had even boldly voiced the opinion that it was in the national interests that he should abdicate in favour of Henry of Monmouth. And finally there was the inevitable clash of age and youth. Youth called for action: age hankered after caution. Soldiering in Wales had whetted the young Henry's appetite for warlike exploits; and there was a growing feeling among his supporters, notably the Beauforts, that a successful foreign war would consolidate the Lancastrian dynasty, in which they themselves had such vital vested interests.

Mastering his illness Henry took charge of the situation, and Henry of Monmouth was compelled to retire from the council. In January 1412 the king was actively negotiating with the Armagnacs. At first sight this looks like pique: in his determination to confound the 'young men' he would turn to the enemies of their French friends, the Burgundians. But the facts will not justify that view. Henry negotiated with the Armagnacs for the very good reason that they had signified their willingness not only to recognise him as the lawful King of England, but to allow him to hold in full sovereignty the duchy of Aquitaine. By August an agreement was reached; and shortly afterwards, Prince Thomas, who resolutely stood by his father in this family quarrel, went overseas with a force to help the Armagnacs. As matters turned out there was no fighting: soon after Thomas landed a reconciliation was patched up between the rival French factions; and Charles of Orleans had the unenviable duty of trying to bargain in money for the withdrawal of the Englishmen.

That Henry of Monmouth's foresight was keener than his father's, subsequent history proves conclusively: as long as England had the friendship and support of the Burgundian faction her fortunes flourished, but when these were withdrawn the expulsion of the English was inevitable.

Nevertheless, not even the most loyal admirers of Henry of Monmouth can applaud his behaviour in 1412 : at the time when his father was negotiating with the Armagnacs he openly patronised Burgundian envoys and admitted them to his household.

The tale went round that the young prince was actively disloyal to his father, and in the summer of 1412 matters came to a head. On his knees before his father in Westminster Hall, Henry of Monmouth protested that he had never acted disloyally ; and if his father thought that he had done so then let him strike him down there and then. How Henry reacted to such a dramatic display of filial loyalty cannot be decided : the incident may have removed some of the misunderstandings between them, but there does not appear to have been any real forgiveness on Henry's part. When Henry of Monmouth later in the year was charged with peculation of monies voted for the defence of Calais, and as a result boldly requested his father to dismiss those around his person who dared to make such a charge against him, all the king was prepared to do was to promise that the allegations would be inquired into in the next parliament ! When the time came for that promise to be fulfilled, Henry was dead, and Henry of Monmouth had been acclaimed King Henry V.

## CHAPTER SIX

### PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL

HENRY's comparatively short reign is rich in problems of constitutional history. One is quickly convinced that a new technique is present in the business of government : the feudal king, strong in the power of his own kingship, is replaced by the constitutional monarch, answerable for his acts to the chosen representatives of his people. But a closer examination of the events of the reign raises a doubt as to how far the new technique is more apparent than real. How far was parliament, as yet a youthful institution, able to dictate its will to the king ; and, more important, to enforce his obedience to it ? Admittedly there was dictation on the one hand, and obedience on the other. But were they the recognised principles upon which government was conducted, or are they to be regarded as isolated incidents in the history of the constitution ?

The idea of parliamentary participation in government, if little more than a hundred years old when Henry seized the sceptre out of Richard's grasp, was already an integral part of the English system of national government. Edward I. had called together representatives of his people, not because he was blessed with any appreciation of the rights of peoples to participate in government, but because he was shrewd enough to realise [or, put another way, poor enough to be compelled to realise] that it was in the royal interest that the people themselves should authorise the imposition of taxes. Doubtless he thought that the matter would end there ; but having sown the wind it remained for him and

his successors to reap the whirlwind. The representatives of the people of England quickly grasped the significance of the move: that once kings go to their own subjects for money they must expect from those same subjects criticism of the ways in which that money is spent. The French War in Edward III.'s reign enlarged the financial obligations of the Crown. As taxes were more frequently demanded, so was criticism more frequently uttered; and the stifling of criticism by repressive measures could only provoke the obstinacy which is so peculiarly English, and which would immediately affect the very source of those taxes.

Gradually, therefore, a new situation emerged. Both king and parliament looked to their rights or prerogatives. The time had not yet come when each could take refuge behind accurate definition: that required a senseless civil war and a bloodless revolution. But when Henry came to the throne in 1399 the commons in parliament considered it as a fact that they had won certain concessions from the Crown; the victory having been gained by their predecessors' refusal to vote taxes until their complaints were dealt with and remedied.

First, there was the *right to tax*. It was the *raison d'être* of the parliamentary system, and was happily founded in a precept of Roman Law that 'what touches all must be approved by all.' Not always were mediæval kings ready to recognise even this right; and even as late as Richard's reign there was an attempt to raise money without parliamentary sanction. It was not a far cry from this right to tax to three other important prerogatives: (1) the right to appropriate supplies for specific purposes: (2) the right to see that the appropriation was strictly carried out, *i.e.*, the management of the expenditure; and (3) the audit of public accounts. Thus, if these prerogatives were to be accepted by the crown, the commons in parliament were involved in every sphere of government. They could criticise the administration. They could discuss domestic and foreign policies, including the making of wars and the concluding of peace settlements.

Theoretically at least none of these prerogatives were regarded as the inalienable right of the commons even in Henry's reign; but in practice all were accepted. The Lancastrian kings could not afford to contest the prerogatives of the commons: first, their title to the throne was a parliamentary one; second, their poverty made them more dependent upon parliament for money than any of their predecessors. It is a high tribute to Henry's tact and forbearance that he accepted the *fait accompli* cheerfully, and never wilfully thwarted the wishes of the elected representatives of his people. This virtuous behaviour is the more notable when it is remembered that Henry himself was a man of strong character and decided opinions, and that the commons often came near to spoiling his schemes and wrecking his policies by their narrow parochialism and uncalled-for niggardliness.

One thing is clear: by the time Henry took possession of the throne, there existed in the nation a consciousness of the importance and dignity of a seat in parliament. The country gentry and prosperous burgesses thought highly of the honour of representing their fellows in the national assembly; and nowhere is the extent of their power more clearly demonstrated than in the repeated attempts made by kings and noblemen to influence the elections.

It might be anticipated that the weakness of Henry's position would result in spectacular victories for the commons. But there were none comparable to, say, the victories gained by the Puritans in Charles I.'s reign, or by the Whigs in James II.'s reign. In some respects the reign was a period of transition: a period when circumstances brought about a readjustment of the political balances so that the side of the commons is more heavily weighted, but still not so adjusted that it permanently outweighed the power of the Crown.

In the first parliament of his reign the commons hailed Henry as the saviour of his country, and with genuine grace

they bestowed upon him 'all the royal liberty' enjoyed by his royal predecessors. They went even farther than this: they allowed him the right of suspending, whenever he so wished, a statute of the realm, the Statute of Provisors; and in so doing permitted the king to override their power of law-making. But the occasion, it must be remembered, was a special one, and their action was not unprecedented. A successful revolution had taken place, and the commons were overwrought to some extent by the political hysteria occasioned by a change of dynasty. Time, too, had shown that the anti-papal sentiments of the Statute of Provisors were in actual practice somewhat too harsh, and even in Richard's reign the power of suspension had been granted to the king.

The parliament-men who assembled at Westminster on January 20, 1401, shared few of their predecessors' enthusiasms for the new dynasty. Not that there was any reversion of feeling in Richard's favour [for he was dead]; but events had persuaded them that the country would fare very little better under Henry's rule; and disappointment, perhaps not unnaturally, begot petulant criticism of royal policy. The commons elected as their Speaker Sir Arnold Savage, a gentleman of Kent, who was not only a notable orator but a man of ability; and he did not hesitate to put in the plainest form before the king the commons' criticisms and petitions.

Parliament opened with the customary declaration of policy by Chief Justice William Thyrnynge, speaking on the king's behalf. His speech was short and to the point: the king was in urgent need of money, and it was assumed that the assembly would promptly meet that need by a generous vote of taxes. But the commons had a grievance: it had come to their ears that the king was regularly informed on the trend of their debates. Naturally this filled them with apprehension: critics would be marked down, and the king might vent his wrath upon them. So it was decided that Speaker Savage should wait upon Henry humbly to beg him not to take notice of such reports. He graciously

gave way, and the victory, therefore, went to the commons.

It was his [Henry's] wish that the commons should deliberate and treat of all matters amongst themselves, in order to bring them to the best conclusions; . . . that he would hear no person, nor give him any credit, before such matters were brought before the king by the advice and consent of all the commons, according to the purport of their petitions.

Freedom of debate was a valuable privilege: the more so in an assembly which was constantly at variance with the royal will.

The pertinacity of the commons, sharply reflected in Speaker Savage's speeches in the royal presence, wearied Henry. To him the criticism was destructive: it appeared as though the commons were deliberately trying to make capital out of his misfortunes; and such an impression could only arise when Henry was convinced that his efforts in the interest of the State were not properly appreciated. His impatience is revealed in the command that the commons should make their requests in writing: this might even suggest that he was heartily sick of Speaker Savage's lecturings!

But Henry kept his head. Encouraged by the ease with which they had forced Henry to recognise their right to conduct their deliberations in their own way the commons went on to stake out another claim—the voting of taxes ought to follow the review of petitions. It was the custom for the king to grant or reject petitions on the day on which the parliament dispersed, that is, after the various supplies had been voted. To have reversed the arrangement would have placed Henry completely in the power of the commons; for it was not to be expected that they would sanction the vote of taxes when their own petitions had been rejected. Henry, therefore, met the demand with a refusal on the ground that it was unprecedented.

The character of the opposition which he met with in



this parliament is clearly revealed by another incident. In the face of a threatened French invasion, Henry and his council had commanded the people of the southern sea-girt shires to equip and man fifty odd ships-of-war. But the commons at once maintained that the precautionary measure was illegal: in other words, it usurped the parliamentary right to deal with all matters of national defence. Henry pointed out that he and the council had acted in good faith and for the safety of the realm at a time when parliament was not in session; but his argument made little impression upon the commons; and once again he gave way.

Niggling criticism is to be detected in the third parliament of Henry's reign [September 30 to November 25, 1402], though it does not appear to have gathered any great force. Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, then Chancellor, preached the opening sermon from the text: 'Great peace have they who love the law'; and proceeded to explain how Henry had received a pressing invitation to assist in healing the Great Schism but was somewhat hesitant about his course of action owing to the unquiet state of the realm and the danger from Wales. It was therefore hoped that the lords and commons would advise the king what he ought to do in those circumstances.

The commons were quite ready to give advice, and they asked that they might be allowed to discuss the points raised by the Chancellor in his speech in a conference with the lords. Whether this was a deliberate attempt to break down the mediæval idea of 'voting by order' or merely a ruse to consolidate the opposition against the king, it is difficult to say. Henry himself may have suspected the latter reason, for he was at first reluctant to grant the commons' request; and even when he eventually gave way he was careful to remind them through their Speaker [Henry Retford] that the concession must not be taken as a precedent.

It was in the fourth parliament of the reign [January 14

to about April 10, 1404] that the parliamentary opposition raised its head most dangerously. And the force of the criticism may not be altogether unconnected with the fact that for the second time Sir Arnold Savage was Speaker. The talk of the day was the inefficiency of the administration. In the previous summer the country had been terrorised by the rebellion of the Percies, as a result of which much damage had been done to life and property, and a feeling of insecurity continued. The rebellion of Owen Glyn Dŵr was still unquelled; and there were rumours to the effect that the extravagance of the royal household, overcrowded as it was by foreign favourites of Queen Joanna, was the real cause of Henry's inability to make ends meet financially.

The root of the trouble appeared to lie in the council. Had Henry had at his disposal wise counsellors things would be very different in the country. Such was a popular view. In some quarters the treason of the Percies was lessened by the belief that they meant to

establish wise counsellors to the advantage of the king and the realm.

A digression is necessary to understand the relations of king to council, and of both to parliament. Stubbs has it that even in the reign of Richard II. the council 'became a power co-ordinate with the king, rather than subordinate to him, joining with him in all the business of state, and not merely assisting but restricting his actions.' As a Lord Appellant Henry himself had been involved in an attempt to make the king's council responsible to parliament for its acts. The variety of the council's functions, as Dicey shows, can be seen in the nature of the business which came under its review. For example, in 1401, it is found dealing with the collection of the customs, a dispute between the abbot and townsmen of Cirencester, the appointment of a courier to go to Carlisle in connection with Anglo-Scottish relations, the means of inquiring into disturbances in the county of Gloucester, pensions for the

sons of Salisbury and Oxford until they reach their majority, the embassy to Rupert III. in connection with the marriage of the Princess Blanche to his son, Ludwig, and the character of the king's retinue. In short, the council dabbled in every sort of State business.

The crux of the matter, however, was the indefiniteness of the council's position. Was it a department of the Royal Household or a department of State? Without exploring precedents too minutely it is accurate to say that the council originated as a department of the Royal Household, but it was widely felt that since the business of government was carried on by the personal servants of the king they should be made answerable to parliament; and from this argument it logically followed that parliament should have some say in their appointment.

Moreover, even before parliament put forth this latter challenge the council had become more or less representative of all classes in the community. The weight of business connected with the management of large estates made it increasingly impracticable for the great nobles to devote much of their time to attendance at council meetings; and as a result the king was compelled to seek the services of men of humbler station in life. On the earliest council in Henry's reign are to be found men like John Prophet, Dean of Hereford, Sir Thomas Erpyngham, Sir John Norbury, Richard Whittington, John Shadworth, and William Brampton. The three last-named were, of course, prominent business men in the city of London; and Erpyngham and Norbury had had long associations with Henry's family. In effect, Henry was quite free to appoint to his council whom he would.

On this issue the commons in his fourth parliament challenged the king. They did not state categorically their claim to nominate the members of the council, but they petitioned that the nominations should be made by the king in parliament, and although the records are

not explicit as to the course of the struggle for this concession, it is clear that there was a good deal of wordy argument about it. On March 1, 1404, Henry announced that

at the strong instances and special requests made at divers times in this parliament by the commons, he had ordained certain lords and others to be of his great and continual council.

The names which were then read out were : the Archbishop of Canterbury [Thomas fitzAlan], the Bishops of Bangor [Richard Yonge], Bath and Wells [Henry Bowet], Lincoln [Henry Beaufort], Rochester [John of Bottleham], and Worcester [Richard Clifford], the Duke of York, the Earls of Somerset and Westmorland, the Lords Berkeley, Furnival, Lovel, Roos, and Willoughby, Dean Thomas Langley, and John Cheyne, John Curzon, Piers Courtenay, John Durward, John Norbury, Arnold Savage, and Hugh Waterton. Henry Beaufort was the Chancellor ; William, Lord Roose, the Treasurer ; Dean Thomas Langley, the Keeper of the Privy Seal ; John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, the Chamberlain ; and Ralph Nevil, Earl of Westmorland, the Marshal. It will be noticed that all were deeply attached to Henry, except Arnold Savage ; and it has sometimes been argued that in this matter of the control of the Council in 1404 the commons merely registered a Pyrrhic victory over the king. But, though it has to be admitted that they had no say in the composition of the council as such, they had forced Henry to name his ' wise counsellors ' in their presence ; and this was a decided step towards ministerial responsibility.

In the same parliament the royal need of money provided a subject for lively debate. The commons could not for the life of them understand why Henry could not live ' on his own,' as his predecessors had done. It would not be overstating the case to say that they did not attempt to understand why it was impossible for Henry to live ' on his own.' So they argued that the royal poverty was due to

the heavy expenses of Henry's household, and proceeded to advocate the dismissal of pensioners and foreigners attached to it. On February 9 three of Henry's intimates [among them was Robert Mascall, one of his confessors] were summoned before parliament and dismissed from office; and there followed immediately an attack on the foreigners in the entourage of Queen Joanna.

There was nothing for it but to bow before the storm; and once again Henry's greatness of character stands out in the way in which he yielded. He was gracious throughout, assuring the parliament-men that while he himself knew no good reason why these faithful attendants should be dismissed from the royal service, he would never keep around his person any in whom the people had not the fullest confidence. So the dispute was ended: but few of Queen Joanna's foreign friends left her side!

If the Rolls of Parliament accurately record the events in this session, then it does appear as though another concession was wrung from Henry—appropriation of supplies. The entry runs thus:

And it is further the will of our lord the king that the grant to be made by the lords and commons now in this present parliament, for the wars and defence of the realm, be put into the hands of certain Treasurers, by the advice of the said lords and commons, that it may be spent only on the wars, and on nothing else.

John Owdeby, John Hadley, Thomas Knolles, and Richard Merlawe were certainly appointed to raise and control the money voted by parliament; but it is doubtful whether they exercised their power in the way which parliament wished.

Before the commons rode away to their homes, they had the satisfaction of having won recognition of a cherished privilege—the right of parliament to decide election disputes. In a petition to Henry and the lords they stated that the sheriff of Rutland had returned a certain

William Oudeby as one of the two knights of that shire, whereas it was commonly reported that Thomas Thorp was the lawfully elected member. The lords sent for the sheriff, William Oudeby and Thomas Thorp, and after carefully inquiring into the case found that the facts as stated in the commons' petition were well-founded. The lords thereupon imprisoned the sheriff in the Fleet, and ordered that Thorp's name should be inscribed on the Rolls of Parliament in place of Oudeby's. Thus royal interference with elections was made increasingly difficult when the returns were subjected to parliamentary supervision ; but, let it be quickly added, a long time was to elapse before that parliamentary privilege was held inviolable by kings.

In the sixth parliament of Henry's reign [March 1 to December 22, 1406] opposition to the government was resolutely conducted from the side of the commons. How far personalities influenced the proceedings it is hard to say, but the Speaker, John Tiptot, was no friend of the king. When Henry was Earl of Derby, Tiptot appears to have been a member of his retinue ; but for some reason or other they had parted company ; and when the commons announced that they had elected him as their leader the king, while willing loyally to abide by their choice, was not slow to observe that Tiptot was somewhat young for the office and ' lacked sense.'

The attack on the administration opened with the usual round of complaints about inefficiency to deal with the affairs of the country : there was extravagance in high places, the rebellion in Wales continued to drain the country of men and treasure, and English merchant shipping suffered irreparable damage at the hands of the pirates in the Channel. In the commons' view all that was needed was strong government and careful spending ; and both might be had from a competent council.

When Tiptot, on behalf of the commons, asked Henry to render to parliament an account of the expenditure of

the monies recently voted to him, he was met with the curt reply :

Kings do not give account.

In a flash Tiptot retorted :

Then their officers must.

For weeks both sides argued round this constitutional principle ; and tempers were sorely tried. In none too good health, Henry was testy and impatient ; and matters might easily have been driven to dangerous conclusions had not an adjournment been rendered necessary for the festival of Easter.

When the commons reassembled on April 27, they had their tempers under better control ; but they continued to press their case. The illness of the king now made it impossible for him to meet them as he had promised to do ; and the Duke of York, whom he had appointed as his deputy, was an unsatisfactory substitute in discussions which involved the personal prerogatives of the king. The commons, however, made it perfectly clear that their grants of money were voted on the strict understanding that they were to be expended

by the advice of the lords and officers to be named and elected by the king in this present parliament.

As usual, Henry's most pressing need was money ; and since it could only be had on these conditions it was futile to waste further time in argument and wrangling. On May 22, therefore, he named and elected his council in parliament. It was very little different in composition from the council of 1404. The number of bishops was reduced from five to four—Henry Beaufort, a year previously translated to Winchester, Nicholas Bubwith of London, Thomas Langley now of Durham, and Edmund Stafford of Exeter. Westmorland dropped out ; Lord Berkeley's place was taken by Lord Burnell ; Lord Grey, as Chamberlain, was a new member ; and Courtenay, Curzon, Durward,

and Norbury were no longer employed. Henry's second son, Thomas, who had been Steward of England since his father's accession, was brought into the council. There were a number of ministerial changes: Thomas Langley became Chancellor; Lord Furnival, the Treasurer; Nicholas Bubwith, the Keeper of the Privy Seal; and Lord Grey, the Chamberlain.

The commons gave some thought to the question of responsibility. They argued that the members of the new council ought to signify their readiness to serve in open parliament; and Henry accepted this view. When Speaker Tiptot asked formally if the lords were willing to serve, Archbishop fitzAlan smartly retorted:

Decidedly, if there are funds enough, but not otherwise.

The shaft went home, and the commons thereupon discussed the question of salaries for the members of the council. Eventually they petitioned Henry to the effect that

the lords of the council be reasonably guerdoned for their labour.

But they were merely endorsing publicly a practice which had long been carried out, though it had not yet been decided what scale the remuneration should follow. The archbishop's point was still not squarely met: as he and his fellow members knew it was impossible to undertake the burdens of government even by council when parliament was reluctant to supply the means for carrying on that work.

Further, the commons tried to lay down the main lines of the conduct of the council in public affairs. The members were to supervise the management of the Crown property, even to the extent of seeing that it was profitably let; and they were enjoined to see that the various ministers carried out their duties in accordance with the council's wishes. Certain members were to be always in attendance on the king, so that he might have the benefit of their



advice at all times; and Henry was solemnly reminded that he must 'trust them.'

There was something of the cynic in Henry, and he must have been amused at the persistence of the commons over the whole question of the council and the responsibility of its members to parliament. He could afford to allow the commons to think that he had accepted their viewpoint: in effect the victory which they appeared to have won was an empty one. The members of his council were his personal friends, and under the guise of friendship he was able to pursue his own plans without much inconvenience. But the precedent was reinforced from the commons' standpoint: twice Henry had given way, and the champions of constitutional government were endowed with long memories.

Before the parliament [it was known as 'The Long Parliament'] was dissolved, and after there had been a renewal of the attack on foreigners in court circles, the commons drew up and presented the Petition of the Thirty-one Articles, which Hallam, probably a little extravagantly, described as 'a noble fabric of constitutional liberty, and hardly perhaps inferior to the Petition of Right under Charles I.' They reiterated the need of a 'continual council' which should remain in existence until the meeting of the next parliament. The royal revenue was to be strictly appropriated to the Royal Household and for the payment of the king's debts. Twice a week the king should be free to receive and consider petitions from his subjects,

it being a most honourable and necessary thing, that such of his lieges as desired to petition him should be heard.

The appointment and functions of sheriffs were regulated; and they were duly required to conduct parliamentary elections according to the time-honoured customs. Finally, the council was to inquire into the unquiet state of the realm, and to see that there was no hurtful interference with common law precepts.

Taken altogether the demands in this instrument were

not unreasonable: neither were they derogatory to the king's royal dignity. Therefore, with his usual grace, he informed speaker Tiptot that he accepted them; and the parliament-men rode away to their constituencies thoroughly satisfied with themselves.

Henry's next or seventh parliament met in Gloucester from October 24 to December 2, 1407. At the time when the writs were sent out [August 26] high hopes of the surrender of Aberystwyth, the political capital of rebel Wales, were entertained; and doubtless Henry thought that it would be accompanied by a spectacular laying down of rebel arms, at which the parliament-men might be present to see for themselves with what zeal their king looked after the interests of the realm. There is, however, more than a suspicion of royal interference with the personnel of this parliament. For one thing, the Speaker chosen by the commons was Thomas Chaucer, son of the poet, who was high in Henry's favour, being Chief Butler and Constable of the Lancastrian castle at Wallingford: it is also known that Henry boasted to an ambassador of the Hanseatic League that he had parliament 'at his will.'

Nevertheless, the call for money aroused opposition even among the members of such a friendly assembly. Not illogically they urged that the cost of the campaign against Owen Glyn Dŵr and his rebels ought to be borne by the Lords Marcher, whose vested interests in Wales were vitally at stake; and the insecure state of the Channel for English merchant shipping necessitated drastic action on the part of the government. Their complaints were met with the blunt reminder that if they were to be remedied, and if the country was to return to a law-abiding state, the taxes must be increased by at least fifty per cent. No wonder this piece of news 'greatly disturbed' them! They bemoaned their lot, and apparently resorted to the old obstructionist tactics. But Henry, on this occasion, was the master of the situation: towards the end of November he indicated that he would terminate the session, and within a few days the commons voted the necessary taxes.

In this discussion on the financial needs of the king there occurred what has been accurately described as 'the first collision between the lords and commons.' At Henry's request the former considered the situation, and quickly decided that certain subsidies or taxes were essential for the security of the realm. Henry thereupon ordered the commons to appoint a deputation to wait upon the lords to hear their views and to the

end that they might take the shortest course to comply with the intention of the said lords.

This was done ; and in due course the result of the conference was reported to the main body of the commons, who were

greatly disturbed at it, saying and affirming it to be much to the prejudice and derogation of their liberties.

Henry had no wish to antagonise the commons unnecessarily, and as the entry in the Roll of Parliament indicates he calmed their fears.

And after that our lord the king had heard this, not willing that anything should be done at present, or in time to come, that might anywise turn against the liberty of the Estate for which they are come to parliament, nor against the liberties of the lords, wills and grants and declares, by the advice and assent of the lords, in manner following : that it shall be lawful for the lords to commune among themselves in this present parliament, and in every other in time to come, in the absence of the king, of the state of the realm and of the remedy necessary for the same. And that in like manner it shall be lawful for the commons, on their part, to commune together of the state and remedy aforesaid. Provided always that the lords on their part, and the commons on their part, shall not make any report to our said lord the king of any grant by the commons granted, and by the lords assented to . . . before the lords and commons shall be of one assent and one accord in such matters, and then in manner and form accustomed, that is to say, by the mounth of the speaker of the commons, in order that the

lords and commons may have their will of our said lord the king.

It is hardly necessary to remark that too much must not be read into the royal message. While it stated a fundamental principle of British constitutional practice, namely, that money bills must originate in the House of Commons, it must be remembered that the principle was not accepted by the king and the lords until much later in parliament's history.

What of the responsibility of the council, appointed in the previous parliament? As the spokesman of the members Archbishop fitzAlan soon informed the commons that their task had been a thankless one: individual members had been compelled to advance money so that the work of government should proceed normally—a hint of the insufficiency of the parliamentary grants; and so difficult was their task that they begged to be allowed to be excused from the obligations of the solemn oath which they had taken in the previous parliament. When Speaker Chaucer asked for an account of the expenditure of the taxes granted in 1406 the Archbishop in so many words refused to comply with the request; and when Henry absolved them from their oath, the commons dropped the matter. It is significant that no new council was appointed in the Gloucester parliament.

Parliament did not meet in 1408 and 1409. Henry's health was now completely broken by disease; and during his illnesses the control of the government passed into the hands of his eldest son, Henry of Monmouth. The council met and transacted its business; and probably at their meetings first occurred that clash of political parties which, in its influence on family relationships, was destined to cloud the closing years of the king's life with misunderstandings and sadness.

The Beaufort faction stood solidly behind Henry of Monmouth: opposed to them was Archbishop fitzAlan, who in time attracted to his side the Prince Thomas. When Henry's abdication in favour of Henry of Monmouth was

discussed the Archbishop immediately scotched the project ; and his opponents knew that without his support it would be impossible to carry through such a scheme. By the end of 1409, however, the Beaufort party was in the ascendant : on December 23, Archbishop fitzAlan resigned the office of Chancellor, and he was succeeded by Sir Thomas Beaufort. On January 6, 1410, Henry, Lord Scrope of Masham, an avowed Beaufort partisan, went to the Treasury.

Three weeks later, Henry, sufficiently recovered from his illness to take his place again as the head of the government, met the eighth parliament of his reign [January 27 to May 9, 1410] with a body of ministers who were quite out of sympathy with him and his policy. For the second time the commons elected Thomas Chaucer as their Speaker ; and even his attitude towards the king was changed. He was more aggressive in the manner in which he asserted the rights of his fellow-members, who almost at the commencement of the session raised the old cry of

good and substantial government.

Henry was again requested

to ordain and assign in the present parliament the most valiant, wise, and discreet lords of his realm to be of his council.

Party strife had gone deep. Henry had to inform the commons that a number of lords whom he had asked to serve as councillors had refused for reasons which he considered to be good ; and it is not a wild guess that the unwilling lords were the Archbishop, Prince Thomas, and their friends. In due course a new council was nominated : it was so palpably Beaufort in sympathy that it is impossible not to suspect that that party had a loud voice in the nominations. The council, for the first time in Henry's reign, was entirely aristocratic in constitution : Henry of Monmouth, Bishops Beaufort, Bubwith, and Langley, the Earls of Arundel and Westmorland and Lord Burnell.

There was at once a move on the part of the commons

to make the members of the newly-elected council take the customary oath in open parliament; but Henry of Monmouth was averse to this, and he roundly told the commons that he and his fellow-counsellors would only consent to serve when they were satisfied that the money voted by parliament was sufficient to enable them to conduct the government in a proper manner. Argument resulted: the commons announced that they were perfectly willing to excuse the prince from taking the oath

because of the highness and excellence of his honourable person;

but they insisted that the other counsellors should be sworn unconditionally, and seemingly won their point.

As president of the council Henry of Monmouth took his duties seriously: there were frequent meetings, and it is probably true to say that in the period between May 1410 and November 1411, the council became more nearly a department of state than a department of the royal household. Matters of great moment were discussed and approved by the council, perhaps the most noteworthy being the alliance with Burgundy and the dispatch of an expeditionary force to his assistance.

Even the burden of disease could be more cheerfully borne than this usurpation of the royal power by the council; and Henry bestirred himself to oppose the policy of his eldest son and his partisans. The last parliament of the reign met on November 3, 1411: Thomas Chaucer was again Speaker. Archbishop *fitzAlan* was an old campaigner in political squabbles; and by means which were thoroughly effective he was able to secure the dismissal of the council and the appointment of one more acceptable to the king. The details of the 'incident' are not accurately known; but on November 30 the old council was dismissed. The change was effected with dignity and without undue friction. It is recorded in the Rolls of Parliament that

the Speaker in the name of the commons prayed the king to thank my lord the prince, the bishops of Winchester,

Durham and others who were assigned by the king to be of his council . . . for their great labour and diligence.

Henry of Monmouth, kneeling before his royal father, formally resigned his position on the council : his fellow-counsellors followed his example. Henry thanked them for their labours, as the Speaker of the Commons had requested him to do, and he wound up the proceedings with the remark that

he felt very contented with their good and loyal diligence, counsel, and duty, for the time they had been of the council.

Insincere undoubtedly were Henry's thanks ; but the popularity of his eldest son compelled him to speak with his tongue in his cheek ; and experience had taught him that his own position would only be weakened by vindictiveness.

The victory which he had gained over the Beaufort faction put heart into the dying king. For once he was able to meet the parliamentary situation fairly and squarely on his own ground : when Speaker Chaucer's assertiveness got the better of him in a royal audience, Henry tartly told him to speak as his predecessors had spoken, and not to introduce 'novelties.' Next day Chaucer went to Henry to make a humble apology ! On the day that parliament broke up [December 19] a new council was sworn : it was composed of members on whom Henry could rely. On the same day Archbishop fitzAlan took up once again the seals of the Chancellor ; and on December 20, his friend, John Pelham, replaced Scrope as Treasurer. And Henry of Monmouth and the Beauforts for the time being went into the political wilderness.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SHADOW OF DEATH

IF greatness of character is revealed by a calm and patient suffering of ill-health, then Henry IV. was great indeed. For more than half of his reign he was scourged by a foul and apparently painful disease, and not once but many times he lay at death's door. The facts of his illness are tantalisingly meagre: names of royal doctors, payments for medicines, wild rumours, all are to be found in contemporary account books and chronicles; but there is not one accurate description of the symptoms of his disease; and much of the evidence about it rests on hearsay and rumour.

Yet there is something to be said for attempting a reconstruction of his medical history; though at the outset it must be confessed that an accurate diagnosis is not to be expected. Said the late Dr Wylie nearly thirty years ago: 'It is as hard to diagnose a mediæval disease as to make sense of a mediæval battle.'

Henry's paternal grandfather, Edward III., went down to the grave a doddering old man, the slave of lechery and the victim of unbridled lust in his declining years. His excesses shocked an age which was not particularly queasy about immorality. His son and Henry's father, John of Gaunt, was known for a notorious wench. Yet during the lifetime of Henry's mother, Blanche of Lancaster, there is no evidence that John of Gaunt befouled his marriage bed. But does that free him from the charge of sexual licentiousness? Surely not: the married state often hides the grossest forms of sexual viciousness; and it is



quite conceivable that abuses of normal sexual functions may have produced a taint in the blood stream of their children.

Turning to the family of Henry's mother, there is no secret about the fact of the physical disability of Edmund Crouchback, the progenitor of the House of Lancaster. The nickname at once suggests that he was a hunchback ; but in addition there is evidence that he suffered from some form of mental weakness, and this gave rise to the fantastic tale that he was actually Henry III.'s heir [see page 121]. Earl Thomas of Lancaster often flew into fits of uncontrolled rage : his enemies were at pains to say that he 'foamed' at the mouth in his anger. It is certain that John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster experienced some difficulty in rearing a family : two of their children died shortly after birth, and rumour had it that twice the Duchess had 'slipped' a child. Too much stress must not be put upon these facts : the mediæval midwife was often a clumsy operator, and the normal conditions of life were sufficiently rough to produce frequent miscarriages.

Either in 1387 or 1388 Henry himself had the 'pokkes' or pox on two occasions. It is almost certain that the word then did not have its present meaning : it usually defined a skin disorder in which eruptive pustules were present. Furthermore, so far as can be ascertained, Henry lived a morally clean life ; and in this respect he stood out as different from his contemporaries. During the winter of 1390-1, when he was on the Prussian *reysse*, he suffered another illness ; for in a letter written many years later he mentioned that he was then attended by the physician of the Ordensmarschal Engelhardt Rabe in Königsberg. There was much sickness in the army to which Henry was then attached ; and it will be recalled that it resulted in the abandonment of the siege of Vilna. A few years later [1395] Henry's own physician, Master John Malvern, is found ordering a supply of medical stores from William Chichele, a London grocer and pharmacist ; and in 1397 a

'plaster' for Henry's back was procured from the same source.

But despite the fact that he was obviously 'physicking' himself even before he came to the throne, Henry was nevertheless able to take an active part in the chivalrous exercises of his age. He was famed for his skill in the joust or tournament; his manly figure everywhere won unqualified praise; and as the history of the early part of his reign reveals he was a man of boundless energy, marching now against the Scots, now against the rebels in Wales, and conducting almost single-handed the routine business of government.

The burdens of kingship [and it was a usurped kingship] must have taken heavy toll of his mental and physical strength. He was surrounded by enemies; he could not always be sure of his friends; and he was borne down with private and public debts. Later came the sorrow of heart, due to the divisions within his own family; and there was also the knowledge that his work was not genuinely appreciated by his subjects.

His health apparently gave no cause for alarm until 1403. In that year there is a record that his surgeon, John Bradmore, ordered £2 worth of medicines from William Chichele; and about the same time people began to whisper that the king was ill. In a letter to Rupert III. of Bavaria, written in 1404, Henry told his German friend that God had sorely afflicted him with a severe illness, though at the time of writing he could add that his strength was rapidly returning. The turning point in Henry's medical history is June 1405. It has been mentioned already that during the night after the execution of Archbishop Richard Scrope, as Henry rested in the village of Green Hammerton, he experienced a terrifying dream, in which he made reference to fire being thrown over his body; and for the following week he lay seriously ill at Ripon [see page 199]. His subjects naturally concluded that he was the victim of divine wrath. Had he not slain the saintly Archbishop Richard Scrope in defiance of the laws of the land and

Archbishop fitzAlan's earnest pleadings? Capgrave related the popular belief:

The Kyng affir that tyme lost the beute of his face. For as the comoune opinion went, fro that tyme onto his deth he was a lepir, and evyr fowlere and fowlere.

One who happened to see Henry during his illness at Ripon testified that 'pushes like teats' stood out on his hands and face.

Apparently Henry made a rapid recovery from that illness; but it was quickly noticed on his return to London that he was extremely touchy about his health; and in order to avoid a particularly virulent outbreak of the 'pestilens' he wandered restlessly from one place to another. During the meeting of the sixth parliament of his reign [March 1 to December 22, 1407], Henry was again indisposed. He had promised the commons that he would confer with them on April 27, but when the day came round he was unable to leave his palace owing to violent pains in the legs, and he sent the Duke of York to deputise for him at the meeting with the commons. He himself was borne with all speed to Greenwich, which was then looked upon as one of the nearest health resorts to the capital.

In 1407 England experienced another 'pestilential' summer; and once again, to avoid infection, Henry made a feverish perambulation of his manors around London. But in the next few years the king was dangerously ill. It is significant that there was no meeting of parliament between December 1407 and January 1410; and thrice only during the same period did the council meet. The failure of Master John Malvern and John Bradmore to cope with the disease brought into Henry's household two distinguished Italian doctors—David di Nigarelli and Pietro di Alcobasse. The former was a Jew of 'Luke' or Lucca. He was well versed in Islamic medical sciences, and in his ownland enjoyed a great reputation as a successful physician. To pay for his services at court he was promptly made

Master of the Mint: Alcobasse was rewarded with a number of rich ecclesiastical sinecures.

Once in the summer of 1408 it was widely rumoured that Henry was dead. He lay unable to move in the house of Archbishop fitzAlan at Mortlake, and it is known that for long periods he was in a comatose condition. It was politic to hide the true condition of the king from his subjects; and Archbishop fitzAlan was no doubt largely responsible for the secrecy, fearing lest his political opponents, the Beauforts, might strike at him by engineering the abdication of Henry. Later in 1408 Henry of Monmouth is required to remain in attendance upon his father; and when the council assembled in the following January the members were assured that the end was not far off. There was evidently some truth in the rumour, for on the day following the meeting of the council [January 21, 1409] Henry made his will; and Dr Wylie quite rightly remarked that it 'forms a marked contrast to those of any of the previous kings, and seems to bear the stamp of panic on the face of it.' In the Middle Ages men usually postponed the making of their wills until the fear of death was hard upon them.

At the time when Henry made his will he was staying in his mansion at Greenwich; and was, as will presently be seen, attended by the principal officers of the realm. The simplicity of the royal will is striking: he deplored a misspent life; thanked his subjects for their loyal services; arranged for the payment of his debts and of an annuity for Queen Joanna; and requested that his body should be laid to rest in Canterbury Cathedral. The witnesses were Archbishop fitzAlan [Chancellor], Bishop Langley of Durham, the Duke of York, the Earl of Somerset [Chamberlain], John Tiptot [Treasurer], John Prophet [Keeper of the Privy Seal], Thomas Erpyngham, John Norbury, and Robert Waterton.

But Henry recovered, though a further attack in March 1409 resulted in messengers being sent post-haste to Ireland to summon Prince Thomas to his father's bedside.

There was no hope, however, of complete recovery: the disease had taken a firm hold upon him; and according to popular report his face was hideously disfigured and his body wasted. Manfully he carried on the work of government, but the old fixity of purpose was absent, and he dragged himself painfully from place to place. He grew shy about his appearance, as well he might, if the evidence of John Hardyng, the rhyming chronicler, is correct:

Of which ryghte nowe ye poorest of this lande  
Wolde lothe to look upon, I understande.

Capgrave retailed another widespread belief:

he was so contracte that his body was scarce a cubite of length.

The Scots boasted that Henry's body was now no larger than that of a child of twelve; and in Paris there was wild delight when travellers returned with the news that Henry's nose, fingers, and toes had rotted away.

Nevertheless in 1411 he could write optimistically about his health to the Emperor Sigismund; and in the face of a strong and popular opposition he was able to maintain control of the government of his own realm. Only a man of indomitable courage could have done that.

It was a joyless Christmas which Henry kept at Eltham in 1412. He was sometimes too weak to walk or ride; he was seldom free from pain; and now and then in his misery he cried out that he hoped God would soon take him. Always at his side was the devoted Archbishop fitzAlan, whom he affectionately called his 'Father in God.' At the end of January 1413, Henry stayed with him in the archiepiscopal palace at Lambeth; and a few days later they journeyed together to Mortlake, there to make final preparations for the meeting of parliament, fixed for February 3. But the day of meeting came, and the king was too ill, or too shy, to face his lords and commons. They were ordered to remain in the capital 'at their own charges.' And they grumbled at the royal lack of consideration!

Henry was dying. Early in Lent he had another of his attacks, and once again the tale went round that he was dead. At Mid-Lent, however, he felt sufficiently recovered to make the customary pilgrimage to the shrine of St Edward Confessor at the back of the High Altar in the Abbey Church at Westminster. It was a painful journey. The members of his household who accompanied him found it difficult to walk slow enough not to crowd in on their king ; and Henry had no sooner reached the shrine than he fell with a terrible crash to the floor. They lifted him up, and bore him to the lodgings of the abbot, where they laid him upon ' a pallet of straw ' in front of a great fire in a room called the Jerusalem or Bethlehem Chamber. The crown was brought in, and placed on a cushion of gold cloth by the king's side ; and if Henry of Monmouth was not actually present at the time when his father fainted, he was quickly summoned to the death chamber.

No man in that room can have wished for Henry's recovery : death would be a happy release from a life which had long been burdensome. It is said that old Archbishop fitzAlan stood apart from the other attendants, weeping silently. By the king's side knelt his favourite confessor, the Dominican friar, Dr John Tille, ready to perform the offices which Holy Church reserves for the solace of the dying. Henry had not moved since he came into the Jerusalem or Bethlehem Chamber ; and at last so certain were the attendants that he was dead that one brought in ' a silken towel ' and drew it across his emaciated face. Then Henry of Monmouth, on the pressing advice of his friends, took up the crown ; but he had no sooner done so, than the king moved. There was a rush to take the ' silken towel ' from his face ; and Henry of Monmouth went forward to explain how it was that the crown was in his hands. Was it troubled conscience which caused Henry to rebuke his eldest son, or a recurrence of the old jealousy ?

What right have you to it, my son, seeing that I had none ?

The young prince gave back a spirited reply :

Sirc, as you have held and kept it by the sword, so will I hold and keep it while my life shall last.

Too weary to argue with his son, Henry dismissed the matter :

Do as you will, my son, I commend me to God, and pray that He may have mercy upon me.

Seeing Dr Tille at his side, the dying man then asked why he was there, and received the reply that he was ready to administer the Viaticum. But first he reminded Henry that he must

repent him, and do penauns, in special for three thingis. On for the deth of Kyng Richard. The othir for the deth of the Archbishop Scrop. The third, for the wrong titil of the crowne.

Henry immediately answered the confessor :

For the to first poyntis, I wrote onto the Pope the veri treuth of my consciens ; and he sent me a bulle, with absolution and penauns assigned, which I have fulfilled. And as for the third poynt, it is hard to sette a remedy ; for my childirn will not suffir that the regalie go oute of oure lynage.

The Sacrament was administered ; and at the king's request Henry of Monmouth came to the bedside. They kissed, and then Henry made his last farewell.

Consider, my son, and behold thy father, who once was strenuous in arms, but now is adorned only with bones and nerves. His bodily strength is gone, but, by the gift of God, spiritual strength hath come to him. For even this sickness, which, as I certainly believe, is unto death, renders my soul braver and more devoted than before. Think, my son, in the midst of the glory and prosperity of the kingdom, whither thou shalt come. Love the Lord thy God, and above all things fear Him. Let thy confessor be a man of wisdom and prudence, who may know how to give thee wholesome

warnings, and may be bold to give them ; and do thou not agree to those who sow pillows under all arm-holes. Reveal all the counsel of thy heart to men distinguished for goodness, temperance and religious character ; especially to those who lead a lonely life, in study, and in prayer, and in sacred repose. Be not thyself fond of ease, but always engaged either about the things of God, or about the good of the kingdom for the sake of God, or about some of those pleasures and excellent sports, which have in them nothing of the foulness of vice. My son, pay faithfully thy father's debts, that thou mayest enjoy the blessing of the Most High ; and may the God of Our Father, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, give thee His Blessing, laden with all good things, that thou mayest live blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

Falling back on his pillows Henry Fourth died, on St Cuthbert's Day [March 20], 1413, in the forty-sixth year of his age. And all good people rejoiced to know that he 'had made a happy end.'

And what was the cause of Henry's death ? Many theories have been advanced ; and they have been refuted almost as soon as they have been stated. It is almost certain that Henry was not, as contemporaries thought, a leper ; for had he been smitten with that foul disease he could not have mixed with people as freely as he did after illness had overtaken him. Acute erysipelas, another suggestion, would have killed him more quickly ; and it is also doubtful whether he was a syphilitic. One theory probably gets to the root of the matter : that the cause of Henry's death was gangrenous ergotism.<sup>1</sup>

The late Professor Dixon Mann in his *Forensic Medicine and Toxicology* defined ergot as

a parasitic formation consisting of the mycelium of the *Claviceps purpurea* developed from the ovary of various

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<sup>1</sup> I believe that my friend, Mr Philip Lindsay, was the first to advance this theory in his *King Henry V.*, which he had from the distinguished antiquary, Dr Philip Nelson. See *King Henry V.* Philip Lindsay. Ivor Nicholson & Watson : pages 89-90.



graminæ, especially rye ; it occurs in wet seasons, and may be so widely diffused as to give rise to epidemics of ergotism in the districts where the diseased grain is grown.

Rye bread has always been a staple food in East Prussia and Russia ; and consequently ergotism has been known in these countries for centuries. Incidentally, rye bread was not an uncommon article of diet in mediæval England.

According to the late Professor Dixon Mann

gangrenous ergotism is first indicated by the occurrence of patches of anæsthesia—the patient experiencing a sensation of cold in the parts affected—or by a burning sensation, accompanied by redness of the skin. Gangrene, mostly of the dry type, which may or may not be preceded by the formation of serous blisters, then sets in ; the peripheral parts of the limbs—the toes and fingers—being most frequently affected. The gangrene, which seldom affects the trunk, may advance as far as the knees or elbows ; when it has reached its limit, separation by slow ulceration takes place, unless the process is expedited by surgical operation. In rare cases the skin only is attacked, the entire cutis undergoing necrosis, and separating from the underlying tissues.

To hark back to Henry's Prussian *reyse* of 1390-1 : it will be recalled that the siege of Vilna was raised owing to sickness among the attackers, and that Henry himself was indisposed during his stay in Königsberg. Was Vilna saved from capture by an epidemic of ergot poisoning ? Did Henry's trouble start with his illness in Königsberg ? It is true that no one can answer these questions with certainty ; but they are pertinent to this discussion, because Vilna and Königsberg are in the heart of a district known to be afflicted with outbreaks of ergotism.

The little that is known about the symptoms of Henry's disease confirms the theory that the king was a victim of gangrenous ergotism. The 'burning sensation' was experienced at Green Hammerton, in that dream which preceded his illness, when he is said to have called out :

Traitors ! ye have thrown fire over me.

The tale that fingers and toes had dropped off suggests that the disease had entered upon its final stages. And from Old French comes a further piece of evidence: the word *argot*, from which *ergot* is derived, means a *cock's spur*. Recollect, the evidence of the one eyewitness of Henry's sufferings at Ripon contains the reference to 'pushes like teats' on the king's face and hands.

A royal funeral in the Middle Ages was invariably a magnificent State ceremony. Skilled barber surgeons were brought in to prepare the body for the lying-in-state and subsequent burial. It was carefully washed, disembowelled and embalmed, and then bandaged with a winding sheet of the finest linen, specially waxed to prevent the air from reaching the skin: the face being left uncovered. On the body was draped a rich robe of State; the crown was placed on the head and a cross on the breast; and the gloved hands were made to grasp the orb and sceptre.

Thus Henry Fourth, founder of the Lancastrian dynasty, lay-in-state in the abbey church at Westminster, in a twinkling forest of candles and tapers. The bells of the city churches tolled an endless knell. At a thousand altars priests sent up prayers for the repose of the dead king's soul. The Londoners crowded reverently into the abbey church, some genuinely to pay their respects to the king who was peculiarly a Londoner, others merely to gratify a morbid curiosity.

At the end of the lying-in-state the body was coffined, and placed on a barge for conveyance down the Thames to Gravesend: it was escorted by eight larger vessels on board of which were Henry of Monmouth, the Princes John and Humphrey, and a crowd of notables in Church and State. Their pennons were cased; their shields draped with black velvet. From Gravesend to Canterbury the body was taken by a horse-drawn bier; the mourners riding behind, and the ordinary people flocking to the roadside to watch the procession go by.

The grave which Archbishop fitzAlan had chosen for

his friend was in the chapel of St Thomas Becket and over against the tomb of Edward Black Prince. There, with great sadness of heart, he committed Henry's body to the dust, being assisted by none of his colleagues on the episcopal bench : it was his prerogative, and he wished no one to share it with him.

In the following May artificers took down to Canterbury a magnificently wrought iron hearse, suitably painted with the arms of the dead king and his family ; and on Trinity Sunday, which that year fell on June 18, a solemn obit was said by Archbishop fitzAlan, when the iron hearse was draped with the banners of the brave knights and great heroes of Christendom, and lighted by hundreds of candles and tapers. Foremost in the congregation was Henry V. : he was attended by his brothers and an array of clergy and nobles. More than twenty years later [in 1437], when the foundations upon which Henry Fourth had raised his dynasty were trembling beneath the weight of a self-seeking nobility, other hands laid by his side the body of Queen Joanna. The burdens of government and the toils of sickness made it impossible for them to love in a care-free way ; and they had drifted apart, Joanna perhaps to find love in other quarters. Nevertheless, soon after Henry's death she placed over his grave a magnificent alabaster tomb, in which was displayed the finest work of the Derbyshire craftsmen.

## EPILOGUE

HENRY FOURTH himself would have asked nothing more of posterity than fairness of judgment for his life and work. He never courted popularity ; and he did not make any spectacular display of his virtues either as a man or as a king. He was always essentially a plain man : perhaps not an attractive personality, and in some things not over-scrupulous in his dealings with other men. When he returned to England in 1399 he was doubtless determined to try his luck at the dangerous game of dynasty-founding, at which his father, John of Gaunt, had played and lost. For fourteen years he laboured strenuously at the task of consolidating his gains. Some will say that it was a noble, others an ignoble, task ; but many will prefer to regard it as an inevitable one, which was mysteriously reserved for him by destiny.

At the hands of historians—and of text-book writers in particular—Henry has not often been fortunate : he is depicted as a soulless and unscrupulous king, whose reign is a sort of unhappy interlude in his country's history ; and in such a murky light it is only to be expected that the true values of his life and work are almost invisible. No one acquainted with the history of Henry's reign will dare to depict him as a heroic king or even a great statesman. He never basked in the splendid light of military genius like his grandfather, Edward III., and his own son, Henry of Monmouth : he lacked the shrewd political acumen of a Henry II. or an Edward I. It was his misfortune to stand between two attractive personalities in history—Edward III. and Henry V. ; he has been conspicuously dwarfed by both of them.

Once the sceptre was in his grasp he was determined never to relinquish his hold upon it. It was his aim to lay the foundations of a new dynasty. Nothing ever distracted his attention from that purpose ; and the quality of his work is to be seen, not in his own reign, but in that of his son, Henry V. In the first decade of the fifteenth century not even a king with Henry V.'s military genius would have led England to victory in France. Within England's womb lay the foetus of baronial factiousness : Henry Fourth was the skilled abortionist who removed that political enormity before conception could take place. Men like Huntingdon, Kent, Percy, and Salisbury were lacking in largeness of vision ; and the advancement of family interests and the acquisition of political power concerned them more than the welfare of the nation. Richard's haphazard rule had allowed them to acquire habits of disintegration ; and they were too old to mend their ways. Once they were removed out of the way, the nation entered upon a period of healthier political life ; and Henry V. was quick to take advantage of the change. The greatest tribute that can be paid to Henry Fourth is revealed in the solidarity of his work. Within sixteen years of the foundation of the Lancastrian dynasty it was possible to remove overseas to France almost the entire military power of the nation without fear of any internal disorder. Compare this with the work of William the Conqueror, admittedly a greater king than Henry Fourth : it took more than forty years to establish firmly the Norman dynasty.

As a plain man Henry was free from humbug. It was politic for him to deny complicity in Richard's murder ; but he was not for ever saying that he knew nothing about it ; and on his death-bed he admitted frankly that he had no title to the throne. But at the same time he was realist enough to see the futility of making reparation for a wrong inevitably done. He told Dr John Tille, his confessor, that his heirs would never allow the throne to pass out of their possession. Even Henry's enemies admitted the need for

the usurpation, though they inconsistently characterised it as a wrongful act: he had promised to give the land strong government and in their opinion had failed to fulfil that promise. The point to be made here is this: it was recognised even by a Hotspur and a Scrope that there was a need for strong government in 1399. That alone explains the ease with which Henry slipped into the throne. He was needed to pilot the ship of state out of troubled waters.

The Puritans put Charles I. to death after a mockery of a trial. Henry Fourth achieved the same end in a less hypocritical way: yet had he so wished he could have invested his crime with judicial respectability, for unlike the Puritans he had behind him the confidence of the entire nation, as represented in parliament. As a matter of fact the parliament-men clamoured for a trial of Richard; and there is not a shadow of doubt that they would have condemned him to death without any pressure from their king. The regicides of the seventeenth century, on the other hand, could only claim the backing of a 'purged' parliament. The same people who justify the Puritan action on grounds of political expediency sometimes condemn Henry for his part in Richard's death: in point of fact, there was infinitely more justification for the removal of Richard than of Charles, for the former's actions were not so easily to be challenged as those of Charles, who lived in an age when parliament had acquired definite and far-reaching powers.

Historical speculation is a pleasant if futile practice. But what would have happened had Henry V. come to the throne in 1399, and his father in 1413? No time will be wasted in trying to deal with such a fantastic question: it might, however, serve as a reminder that few of Henry Fourth's difficulties were of his own making.

Take, first, the trouble in Wales. The rebellion of Owen Glynn Dŵr was admittedly the most serious uprising of the Welsh against their English overlords; and it was the outcome not of the peculiar love of disorder of Celtic peoples, but of the studied insolences of generations of

English lords marcher. These men believed that the Welsh were as the dirt beneath their proud feet: they never wanted to know anything about Welsh aspirations and traditions. In some respects there was much of the lord marcher in Henry: the House of Lancaster had estates in the Marches of Wales. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that he inherited marcher prejudices, and that these were emphasised when it was popularly reported that the majority of Welshmen were Richard's men. The great weakness in his policy towards Wales was his refusal to see that he was being misinformed by men who had strong vested interests in the principality. Had Henry, on the other hand, shown an intelligent and sympathetic appreciation of the point of view of his Welsh subjects, he would certainly have maintained good order and peace in Wales; but such an enlightened policy would have aroused the bitterest animosities in the ranks of the marcher baronage; and men like Grey and Arundel would have risen against their king in defence of their marcher rights.

Then, again, the complications with Scotland and France were traditional, the legacies of misguided English kings who believed that they had a legal right to assert their sovereignty over these two kingdoms. Public opinion in England emphatically endorsed these pretensions; and to have abandoned the traditional policy would have provoked a great popular outcry against the king and his government. Richard and John of Gaunt both owed some of their unpopularity to the fact that they saw the hopelessness of the traditional policy. The former was accused of having sullied the honour of his realm in order to marry a French princess; the latter's desire for peace with Scotland led men to call him 'a carpet knight.' As the founder of a new dynasty it was imperative that Henry's hands should not be tied by foreign wars; but it was equally imperative that the avoidance of war did not call down upon his head the national wrath.

Usually Henry's share of luck was small. However, in his dealings with Scotland and France, Fortune smiled

graciously upon him, when the capture of James I. of Scotland and the quarrel of the Armagnacs and Burgundians in France weakened the power of the two kingdoms, and prevented a concerted attack upon his authority. Together Scotland and France, assisted by Owen Glyn Dŵr and his rebels, might easily have overwhelmed Henry; and had that happened the realm would have been at the mercy of the Scots, French, and Welsh. It required more than luck to avoid such a disaster; and it would be grossly ungenerous not to admit that there was a certain well-thought-out purpose behind Henry's foreign policy. If he was conciliatory towards the Scots and French, he was also firm in his demands from both of them. Like Elizabeth in a later age, Henry was determined not to let his enemies put him in the wrong. He had no delusions about the results of a policy of conciliation: war with both countries was inevitable; and his work was to postpone hostilities until he himself was ready to meet his enemies.

There is no doubt that in his dealings with the Percies, Henry carried conciliation too far. He completely misjudged the character of the old Earl of Northumberland. But they had been fast friends; and Henry was indebted to the Percies for the sterling services which they had given him in 1399. Ingratitude was not one of Henry's failings: it was gratitude which saved John Ferrour of Southwark from a traitor's death in 1400. Contemporaries all agree that Northumberland was as cunning as an old fox, and a past master in the art of deception. After the debacle of Shrewsbury, Henry taught the earl a sharp lesson: it appeared to have gone home, for in open parliament Northumberland of his own volition insisted upon taking again the oath of allegiance and called down upon his head the vengeance of Heaven if ever he played the traitor in the future. In the face of such penitence could Henry withhold his forgiveness? There is no evidence, however, that after 1403 he reposed the same trust in Northumberland; and in dealing with North Country affairs after that date he came more and more to rely upon the Nevils. Henry was



probably shrewd enough to know that the Nevil power was strong enough effectively to check any outbreak of Percy disloyalty.

Protestantism has never forgiven Henry for the fact that it was in his reign that *de Haeretico Comburendo* was placed upon the Statute Book of the Realm. Again Henry is condemned for being a child of his age. To him heresy was a terrible crime, not perhaps because it endangered the safety of the soul, but because it threatened with disruption the safety of the State; and it is at least doubtful whether 'the burning death' was more inhuman than the customary 'drawing' of the entrails before hanging. It was the symbolic power of fire which appealed to the heresy-hunters of the Middle Ages: it purified a befouled soul in a way which no other punishment could possibly do. Henry must have cynically applauded the zeal of Archbishop fitzAlan in hunting down and bringing to justice the heretics: it saved him the trouble of having to proceed against them himself for activities subversive to law and order.

Not the least of Henry's difficulties was the growing assertiveness of the parliament-men. In order to pursue his anti-French policy Edward III. had been compelled to accept the commons as his partners in government, for they held the national purse strings; and when Henry Fourth came to the throne it was too late to think about a dissolution of the partnership. The constant 'grucche' of the commons was that Henry could not 'live on his own' as they maintained his predecessors had done. He was continually coming to them for money; and they were quite incapable of realising either the reasonableness or urgency of the royal need. An examination of the proceedings of Henry's parliaments leaves the impression that the parliament-men invariably felt that they were being 'done' in some way or another, but could never quite discover how. A less scrupulous king would have quickly lost patience with them. Like Charles I. he might have resorted to other methods of raising funds, and have braved the outcry which would have followed such lack of consideration for the rights

of parliament. Not so Henry : he dealt tenderly with his ' faithful commons,' and was never reluctant to make concessions to them. It is often said that his abject poverty forced him to be ' humble ' in the presence of these parliament-men, in whom reposed the power to vote or withhold taxes. That Henry was poor has to be admitted ; but there is no evidence that he ever cringed before the people's representatives in order to obtain money. It would be more charitable, and certainly truer, to admit frankly that he achieved political greatness by the skilful and gracious way in which he accepted parliament as a factor in government.

The tragedy is that Henry's subjects never realised the true worth of his achievement ; and there was little genuine sorrow in the land when the news spread that he was dead. People had forgotten what an attractive personality he once was. He was singularly handsome as a young man, his good looks being the legacy which he inherited from his mother, Blanche of Lancaster, and his grandmother, Philippa of Hainault, than whom in Chaucer's estimation there were no lovelier ladies in the land. He was ' of mean stature,' but physically ' well-proportioned and compact ' ; and he took an obvious pride in his person, wearing his clothes well and in accordance with the dictates of fashion. His hair was auburn ; and his beard russet-brown, with a touch of gold about it, and probably kept in the ' bi-forked ' style.

In his travels abroad he had won high respect from all with whom he had come into contact. Philargi Pietro, who was consecrated Pope Alexander V., retained a pleasant memory of the young English nobleman whom he had met when he was Archbishop of Milan ; and the Emperor Manuel II. could not speak too highly of his charm of manner, his graciousness towards his guests, his wit, and his exquisite taste in clothes. In Paris, in the days of his exile, so Froissart avers, Henry made a great impression upon the people : he was

bien aimé de tous, gracieux, doux, courtois and traitable,

Even in 1409, when he was overborne with sickness, the two envoys from the Order of Teutonic Knights [Dietrich von Logendorf and Lyffard von Herford] were at pains to comment upon the gracious way in which the English king received them.

Travel had widened Henry's outlook, and made him alive to the calls of culture and learning. He himself spoke French, Spanish, and Latin ; and it has even been suggested that he had a knowledge of Italian. His sons, Henry of Monmouth and Humphrey, were sent to Oxford ; and from the family account books it is clear that even before they embarked upon a university career great care was taken in the matter of their education. According to Capgrave [and he loved to stress the fact that he is an unbiassed witness] Henry himself did not despise scholarly attainments : he

was a studious investigator in all doubtful points of morals, and that as far as his hours of rest from the administration of his government permitted him to be free, he was always eager in the prosecution of such pursuits.

Not only was he of an inquiring turn of mind, but he was not without inventive genius ; and he is thought to have designed a great 'gonne' or cannon which was used [with what effect is not known] at the siege of Abcrystwyth in the closing stages of the Welsh rebellion. Capgrave again records that Henry was blessed with

so tenacious a memory that he used to spend great part of the day in solving and unravelling hard questions.

Geoffrey Chaucer, John Gower, and Thomas Occleve received royal pensions ; and Henry at one time tried to persuade Christine de Pisan to leave her own distracted France to settle in England.

In his relations with women, Henry was a model knight. It is recorded that during his stay with Gian Galeazzo Visconti in Milan his host's fifteen years old niece fell irrevocably in love with the handsome Englishman ; but

Henry, while he was not unresponsive to the little lady's advances, never allowed their friendship to develop into a sordid intrigue. It could justly be said of John of Gaunt that 'he was a great fornicator'. with equal justice it could be said of his son, Henry Fourth, that he lived chastely all his days.

To think of Henry as a paragon of virtues is to forget that he was a plain man. He was by nature passionate and hot-tempered; but experience taught him that passion and temper have the boomerang knack of coming back to destroy the subject in whom they are found; and the grim experience of life, first, as the subject of a capricious tyrant, and, later, as a king himself, taught Henry to value caution and quiet reflection. Not always was he successful in mastering his passions: he could fly into rages of seemingly uncontrollable temper, and at such times he could say bitter things. But that is the experience of every ordinary man.

Political necessity often compelled Henry to be cruel; but by nature he was a most humane man, quick to forgive an injury and slow to forget a service. So Thomas Occleve maintained, he shared this generosity of heart with his father, John of Gaunt. Advising Henry V. the poet says:

Our liege lorde your fader dothe the same,  
Now folowe hem two my loide in Goddes name.  
They ofte hade grete cause hem to venge,  
But her spiritis benynge and pesible  
Thought that craft [vengeance] unlusty and alcnge [grievous]  
And forbare it. They knewe it unlesible.  
To mercy were her hertes ay flexible.

It is a picture of Henry Fourth which later generations of his fellow-countrymen have not often been privileged to see.



## APPENDIX

WHERE this rebellion of the commons first began, diuerse haue written diuerselie. One author writeth, that [as he learned by one that was not farre from the place at the time] the first beginning should be at Dertford in Kent : for when those poll shillings, or rather [as other haue] poll groats, were to be collected, no small murmuring, cursing, and repining among the common people rose about the same, and the more indeed, though the lewd demenour of some vndiscreet officers, that were assigned to the gathering thereof, insomuch that one of those officers being appointed to gather vp that monie in Dertford aforesaid, came to the house of one Iohn Tiler, that had both seruants in his house, and a faire yonge maid to his daughter. The officer therefore demanding monie for the said Tiler and for his wife, his seruants, and daughter, the wife being at home, and hir husband abroad at work in the towne, made answer that hir daughter was not of age, and therefore the [she] denied to paie for hir.

Now here is to be noted, that this monie was in common speech said to be due for all those that were vndergrowne, bicause that younge persons as well as of the man as of the woman kind, comming to the age of fourteene or fifteene years, haue commonlie haire growing foorth about those priuie parts, which for honesties sake nature hath taught vs to couer and keepe secret. The officer therefore not satisfied with the mothers excuse, said he would feele whether hir daughter were of lawfull age or not, and therewith begun to misuse the maid, and search further than honestie would haue permitted. The mother streightwaies made an outcrie, so that hir husband being in the towne at worke, and hearing of this adoo at his house, came running home with his lathing staffe in his hand, and began to question with the officer who made him so bolde to keepe such a rule in his house : the officer being somewhat

presumptuous, and high minded, would forthwith haue flowne upon this Tiler ; but I. Tiler auoidinge the officers blow raught him such a rap on the pate, that his braines flue out, and so presentlie he died.

Great noise arose about this matter in the streets, and the poor folks being glad, curie man arraied himselfe to support Iohn Tiler, and thus the commons drew together and went to Maidstone, and from thence to Blackheath where their number so increased, that they were reckoned to be thirtie thousand.

From Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*. 1807 Edition. Vol. ii. pp. 735-6.

## A NOTE ON THE DESIGN OF THE JACKET

MISS CECILE M. DRIFFIELD has supplied the following note on the motifs which she used in the designing of the jacket for this book :

‘ The Crown is taken from a drawing of Henry IV.’s crown on the monument in Canterbury Cathedral. It appears to be a modification of Edward I.’s crown, which was fabricated of three fleurs-de-lys, between each of which were placed supplementary pearls.

‘ Henry was peculiarly fond of the badge of the White Ostrich Feather. It had a garter or belt which carried the motto, SOVEREYGNE, and was entwined around the feather.

‘ There is considerable difference of opinion about the origin of the famous Lancastrian SS collar, which I have used as a border on the jacket. It is said to have been instituted by Henry IV., but perhaps this is not strictly true, since John of Gaunt is known to have been particularly fond of a “collar of new design.” Camden believed that SS stood for SANCTUS SIMO SIMPLICIUS, but it is more probable that it was a development of the Ostrich Feather badge, since on some collars occurred the words, SOVEIGNEZ VOUS DE MOY, or SOUVERAIN. The idea seems to have been to express loyalty and remembrance.’



## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

### MODERN WORKS

*History of England under Henry the Fourth.* J. H. WYLIE.  
4 vols.

A magnificent display of historical scholarship by a man who spared himself no trouble and went to endless pains in the production of *genuine* history. This work deserves a wider popularity than it has hitherto had : so freely have I drawn upon it that I can but hope that my repayment of the debt which I owe the author will take the form of bringing his books to public notice. I found them not only indispensable, but as entertaining as a score of adventure stories.

*John of Gaunt.* S. ARMITAGE-SMYTH.

This is an excellent *life* of John of Gaunt. The author rightly keeps Henry of Bolingbroke well in the background ; but the book is invaluable for a proper understanding of his home life and environment.

*Lancaster and York.* Sir JAMES RAMSAY. Vol. i.

This book was my constant companion during the making of my *life* of Henry IV. It gives a broad and accurate picture of the reign, and enables the reader to grasp the main features of Henry's work.

*Lollardy and the Reformation in England.* JAMES GAIRDNER.  
Vol. i.

Invaluable for the proper understanding of the problem of Lollardy : the author's opinions may sometimes appear controversial, but those who can rise above religious controversy will find a nice impartiality about them.

*Owen Glyn Dŵr.* J. D. GRIFFITH DAVIES.

My little book tries to give a picture of the great Welsh rising from the Welshman's point of view. Another aspect, namely that from Henry V.'s point of view, is given in my *life* of Henry V.

## CHRONICLES AND LETTERS

*Chronicon Adae de Usk.* Edited by Sir E. M. THOMPSON.

Adam Usk was a Welshman, who was much attached to Thomas fitzAlan, Archbishop of Canterbury. Until 1402 his record is probably that of an eye-witness; but afterwards it contains much hearsay information. His connection with Owen Glyn Dŵr, however, enabled him to retail some interesting facts about that Welsh gentleman and his rebellion.

*Annales Ricardi II. et Henrici IV.* Rolls Series.

This work is not always fair to Henry: it was probably written by a monk of St Albans called William Wintershill.

*The Chronicle of England.* JOHN CAPGRAVE. Edited by Rev. F. C. HINGESTON. Rolls Series.

*The Book of the Illustrious Henries.* JOHN CAPGRAVE. Translated by the Rev. F. C. HINGESTON.

The author was an Augustinian monk, who eventually became Prior of the Augustinian house at Lynn. He has been aptly described as a man of 'singular honesty and straightforwardness of character.' All the same one must remember that the *Chronicle* was dedicated to Edward IV. [a Yorkist], whereas the biographies of the Henries was written for the Lancastrian Henry VI.

*A Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II., Henry IV., Henry V., Henry VI.* Edited by J. S. DAVIS. Camden Society.

This is a useful source book which helps to fill in the gaps in the other contemporary records.

*Original Letters Illustrative of English History.* Edited by Sir HENRY ELLIS. Second Series, vol. i., and Third Series, vol. i.

These documents are interesting, though here and there the editorial notes must be checked.

*English Chronicle of London.* Edited by Sir HENRY NICHOLAS.

One is often exasperated by the paucity of the information in this record; but it is nevertheless useful, particularly for details relating to the history of the city of London.

*Histoire du Roy d'Angleterre Richard.* JEAN CRETON. Printed in *Archæologia*, vol. xx.

Creton was with Richard in 1399, and throughout supported his cause.

*Chronicle.* JOHN HARDYNG. Edited by Sir HENRY ELLIS.

Apparently he was a 'borderer,' or perhaps a Scot. His facts are not always reliable, though they are invariably picturesque.

*Royal and Historical Letters during the Reign of Henry the Fourth.*

Edited by the Rev. F. C. HINGESTON. Rolls Series.

An invaluable book.

*Historia Anglicana.* THOMAS WALSINGHAM. Rolls Series.

*Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland.* RAPHAEL HOLINSHED.

*Chronicle.* EDWARD HALL.

If the authors of these three authorities are not strictly contemporary writers it is well to remember that they often had access to records which are now lost ; and by careful use of their narratives it is possible to get the atmosphere of Henry's times.

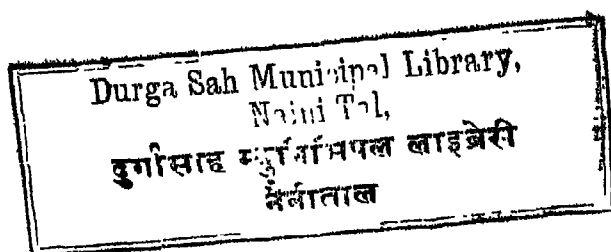
*Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land by Henry, Earl of Derby [afterwards Henry IV.], in 1390-1 and 1392-3 : being the Accounts kept by his Treasurer during two years.*  
Edited by LUCY TOULMIN SMITH.

This, the account book of Richard Kyngeston, is invaluable for following Henry's movements abroad.

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NOTE.—This list is not intended to be exhaustive : it merely represents some of the authorities which have been consulted during the making of this *Life* of Henry IV.

J. D. G. D.



# INDEX

[In the making of this Index I have been greatly assisted  
by my father, the Reverend Thomas Davies, and  
Miss Cecile M. Driffeld. J. D. G. D.]

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